

THE 4452. C. 13
Gospel-Feast Opened :

OR, THE
Great Supper of the Parable,
DISCOVERED
In several SERMONS.

By JOSEPH HUSSEY,
Pastor of a Congregation in Cambridge.

Iſa. 25. 6. And in this Mountain ſhall the Lord of Hoſts make unto all People a Feaſt of Fat Things, a Feaſt of Wines on the Lees, of Fat Things full of Marrow, of Wines on the Lees well refined.

Prov. 9. 5. Come, eat of my Bread, and drink of the Wine which I have mingled.

Matth. 22. 2. The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto a certain King, which made a Marriage for his Son.

We are God's Trustees, to whom he hath committed the Gospel, and we are falſe to our Truſt, if we don't Preach *Chriſt*, who is the Summ and Subſtance of the Gospel. *Froſt's Sermons, pag. 276.*

Dulce eſt nomen Jeſu, mel in ore, melodia in Aure, in Corde plusquam jubilæum. D. Hen. Wilkinſon. conciones ad Academicos Oxonienses, de Scientia Chriſti. p. 157.

Chriſtus eſt Liber vitæ in quo ſcriptus eſ. Luth. loc. com. claſſ. ſecund. p. 95.

Si quos Chriſti tædium capit, ij Chriſtum nunquam guſta-verunt. Camer. Myroth. Evang. p. 151.

L O N D O N,

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*To that particular People of God
in Cambridge over whom by
a special Call I am fixed, as
a Watchman in the Gospel,
and a Minister of our Lord
Jesus Christ.*

DEAR FRIENDS,

THE Great Work
of Faithfulness and
Labour which by
Fervent Prayer and a Un-
animous Call you have pre-
vailed on me to come hither
and undertake, for the pro-
moting the Honour of Jesus
Christ,

THE EPISTLE

Christ, the Edification of your own Souls, and the Conversion of poor, lost Sinners, doth much influence and incline my Spirit, almost to *do*, or *be* any Thing, in order to these Blessed Ends. As the Divine Providence hath cast my Lot among you, so now a Divine Precept doth make me to be in all Things for your Good,

^{2 Cor. 4.}
^{5.} *your Servant for Jesus sake.* I have therefore in this poor Essay before you, at your own Instant and joint Applications, brought forth, as far

^{Mat. 13.}
^{52.} *as I, a poor Scribe, instructed unto the Kingdom of God, am able,*

DEDICATORY.

able, out of Christ's *Treasury*
Things new and old. These
 are the *Fruits which your Souls* Rev. 18.
14.
have lusted after, and the Fruits
 for which you have been cry-
 ing, *Give, Give :* i. e. you Prov. 30.
15.
 have askt them from the *Pul-*
pit, and some of you have
 thought long before the *Week*
 was gone about, to take them
 in the *Great Congregation :* You Psal. 40.
9, 10.
 have now askt them again from
 the *Press ;* and lo ! here is the
Savoury Meat, such as your Gen. 27.
7.
Soul loves ! I desire to bring
 no other into your *Chambers,*
 than what the *Lord your God* v. 20.
hath brought me : I hope I

THE EPISTLE

Luk. 11.
11, 12. dare not tender you *Stones* for
Bread, or venture to bring in
a *Scorpion* to you that ask an
Egg. Indeed, I had not once
a Thought, that these Papers,
without being *burnt*, must have
lighted up a *Candle* for any to
see to Sup by; but now I
judge, that so long as I am
your's to serve you, I must
light up any Thing, if you
may but *shine* the more. You
have professed a *sweetness* to
your Taste at the first prepara-
ring of this Discourse, when
this Banquet (as now you see
it) was only made ready for
some Meals upon the *Lord's*
Days.

DEDICATORY.

Days, 'till I had finished the Subject: And now I crave this Blessing upon your Meat, that as you have chosen more than *other Seven Days* to keep this 2 Chro
30. 23. Feast, it may be also sweet and nourishing in your *daily Bread* at home! that however the Covers may in process of Time be found mouldy in some of your Houses, the Provision it self may never be so in your Hands, much less putrifie in any of your Heads, 'till it *breed Worms and stink*. 2 Tim. 16.
 I know it is possible in rich Feeding to contract Diseases, and instead of killing Hunger,

THE EPISTLE, &c.

quicken some Mortal Sting.
But tho' *Spiders* will suck Poy-
son out of the sweetest Flow-
ers, *I am perswaded better Things*
Heb. 6.9 of you, who profess to be *New*
Creatures.

Now, that the *Doctrine* of
Grace here offered may meet
with the *Principle* of Grace to
receive it, and afford good
Nourishment, when good *Food*
and a sanctified *Appetite* meet,
is the Prayer of

DEAR FRIENDS,

Your Faithful Servant in
the Holy Work of the Lord,

Joseph Hufley.

THE

THE
EPISTLE
TO THE
Reader.

IT is sad and humbling, that Man's Nature is so prone to treat the Religious Mysteries of the Gospel with scorn and indignation, and that, because we have this Treasure in 2 Cor. 4. 7. Earthen Vessels, it should be esteemed as the Potter's Clay : We must Isa. 29. 16. indeed

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indeed expect that such as sit in the
Psa. 1. 1. Scorners' Chair, will never, with
Judg. 3. 20. Ehud, rise up, tho' we have a Mes-
sage from God to them. Until Men
are Cur'd of a spiritual Phrensie, they
will be sure to reproach others as a
Act. 26. 24 Generation beside themselves: But
there is a Day approaching when they
will in astonishment Curse their own
Luk. 24. 25 Madnes; Oh Fools, and slow of
Heart to believe!

I am sensible that the Captious Rea-
der must, the Curious Reader will,
and the most Candid Reader may
spy out abundant Failings in the Com-
posing of this Work; Tho' God's
Feast be unexceptionable, yet Man's
Cookery may not be grateful to the
Palate. The Composure of the ensuing
Treatise is perhaps no ways adapted to
suit the Genius of any but the Godly,
nor,

to the Reader.

nor, it may be, can be expected to suit but with some of them either. Undoubtedly, there have been many Hundred Treatises suppress'd which have better deserv'd the Light, and yet shall never see it, but are condemn'd to be buried in a perpetual Grave of Dark-ness. These Provisions in the Dis- course are mostly for such as find their Appetite quick in their Master's Work, to sit down and eat under Christ's Shadow; they are prepared for the needy, and would miss their End, if they should only please the Dainty. I may herein use the Ex- pression of one of my * Reverend Pre- decessors in this Place: These Things were not intended to Cram the Full, but to Feed the Hungry, and to the Hungry every bitter thing is sweet. The Subject is weighty, tho' the Management is contemptible. The

Cantic. 2. 3

* Mr. W. Green. Au- thor of the Book enti- tled *Abyssus Mali*, or the Cor- ruption of Man's Na- ture.

Prov. 27. 7.

Pub-

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Publication was desired for the Profit of Men's Souls, and I hope is so design'd by the Publisher. If it attains unto that Mark, and saves any, tho' of the meanest rank, I hope I shall rejoyce, tho' it can hit nothing else, and vain Spectators should laugh at the Arrows, who were never prickt in their Heart. I shall study submission to the Judicious, and beg amendment under the Castigations of the wise, but desire only Patience under evil Censures and the Reproaches of Christ from Fools. There are some who have bless'd God already for this Foolishness of Preaching, and can bear with me (I will not say, a little, but much) in my Follies from the Press. I confess it is God's Word, and he may use it how he will; he may accomplish his own Ends either at first, or second Hand, or Both: If it therefore tends
this

AG. 2. 37.

Heb. 11. 26

1 Cor. 1. 21

2 Cor. 11. 1

to the Reader.

this way to preserve the Original in the Hearers, it will Answer more for all the Failures of the Copy than a Thousand studied Apologies.

The Phraseology will be thought by many to be too mean and illiterate, and the Style too loose and Popular : But with me it is a very small Thing, that I should be judged of 1 Cor. 4. 3. such, or of Man's judgment ; for I would choose rather to come in Plainness of Speech, even to the Eyes as well as the Ears of Men, than in the enticing words of Man's Wisdom. 1 Cor. 2. 4. It is often times more difficult to be Profitable than to be Eloquent ; in the latter our Education qualifies, and makes it easie to speak as Men, but in the former, a Man cannot receive Joh. 3. 27. it, except it be given him from above. It is harder to stoop below a
Man's

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Man's own Proportion, to go the same height with Children, than to walk our full Length with Men. As on the other Hand, it is easier to Preach or Write somewhat like an Academick, Rom. 2. 20 than like an Instructor of the Foolish, or a Teacher of Babes, and to play the Orator than perform the work of a Divine. It is more profitable, and yet a Task of greater Burden, to gather up Matter from the Holy Text, than to utter it in fine words. It is harder to draw the true Lineaments of the Face, than to mix the Paint: 'Tis more laborious to dig in the Mines, than to gather loose stones upon the Surface, and to thresh out the Grain, than refine the Heap, and blow away the Chaff.

What a sad Case were England in, if all the Books in Divinity that have

to the Reader.

have been written, had been publisht
(suppose) in the Profoundest Eloquence,
as many of the Publishers (I doubt not,
but) could have done, in reference to
their Intellectual Abilities, and spoken
in a Scholastical Phrase consistently with
their Learned Education: But the vul-
gar may bless God for the Treatises
that have been written in such a Style
as Dr. Preston, Sibbs, Mr. Bolton,
Rogers, Greenham, Perkins, Fen-
ner, Sedgwick, Allein, and Hun-
dreds more.

The plain Truth is, to publish Books
for the common sort in our own Tongue
Nominally, and stuff them all along
throughout the Body of the Discourse
in other Language really, savours too
much of a Jesuitical Equivocation,
while we Condemn the Papist; for
if they lock up the Scriptures, and
take

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Luk. 11. 52 take away the Key of Knowledge, those would lock up other Good Books, and give the People a strange Key that was never made to open them.

However, if Men at a Feast love to see fine Glasses at a Side-board, let them look over to Margents, because it is Pity they should find more than is needful, among the Guests, upon the Table.

Tho' we use Metaphors, yet it is no more than the same Popular, known way, which Christ (the best Master of Language in the World) used, when he taught his own Disciples. We are immers'd so much in Matter, while in the Body, that our Instructions had need be sensible to convey spiritual Things the easier. These are oftentimes more Natural, and do accommodate the

Ex=

to the Reader.

Expression to the Thing beyond a Phrase Sublime, or Philosophical. As indeed it is too laborious and impertinent to fetch Metaphors remote, or un-obvious, so it argues too much Scorn and Disdain to trample those under our Feet which lye next us. As therefore, Reader, thou findest the whole likened to a Supper, Marvel not at the matter, Eccl. 5. 2. if sometimes thou findest the Parts of it to be expressed in such Vessels, as a Supper, or a Feast is wont to be served in withall.

Let not an occasional use of some Expressions pecaliam to English-men offend any English Reader, because they will not bear a Translation verbatim; for in this Feast we did not study to recommend it by Forreign Sauces, and therefore are content to use what we find at home, and do

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recommend it to a Christian Appetite accordingly. A blunt Anglicism (as we call it) may upon some occasions be more affecting than a borrowed Latinism : A rugged, unpolisht Phrase, will stick more on some minds, and to better purpose, than smoother Eloquence that slides off from their Thoughts very inobservably ; and if we herein do become barbarous to gain the Barbarous, we are but in the same Point of yielding with Paul, who became all Things to all Men, that he might by all means gain some ; to the Jews he became as a Jew, that he might gain the Jews ; to the weak became he as weak, that he might gain the weak !

1 Cor. 9.
v. 20, 22.

Peradventare, the frequent use of the second Person in the singular Number [Thou and Thee] may offend some

to the Reader.

some; to whom I would seriously propose this, viz. That these Sermons are here publisht in the same Applicatory Form they were preacht; and in Discourses of this Nature we cannot be too close and particular. * A great ^{* Bp. Wilkins, Gift of Preaching, pag. 37} Man saith, that the Design of Preaching is to bring down General Truths to particular Cases; I am sure it should be so; and it was so in a Greater Preacher than He, and before a greater Audience than we are wont to meet with, even in Nathan and David, when he began with a Parable; but at last spoke plainly, unto himself, Thou art the ^{2 Sam. 12. 7} Man. The Arrow doth more Execution, when it enters between the ^{2 Kings 22. 34} Joints of the Harness, than when it flies at random.

The greatest Blemish which perhaps

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may appear throughout this Work in the Eye of others, may be a co-incidence of the Argument, which indeed sometimes unavoidably returns, and must occur, that every Part might be handled duely ; for otherwise if we had been more sparing to avoid the giving of too much, we had impair'd the Table, and taken too much away. I need not fly to the Writings of Great Men to find a Sanctuary from the Reader's pursuit of me herein, but to the best City of Refuge, even one that hath Foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God : For the Holy Writings do abound with Parallel Instances, that can never be judg'd by Pious and Sober Minds to be guilty of (when they condemn) vain Repetitions. I will not trouble the Reader with many Witnesses, only produce Two, which is a sufficient Number for

Num. 35.
13. 15.

Heb. 11. 10

Matth. 6. 7.

Deut. 19. 15

to the Reader.

for Proof to clear me, if my Crime were judged to be Capital : See Matth. 10. 15. compared with chapt. 11. 24. and Heb. 3. 15. compared with chapt. 4. 7. And I may add, if a further Apology herein be needful, that if the same Thing occurs, where necessity requires, yet the manner of opening and illustrating is distinct, and methinks the Diversity, suppose it were separate from the necessity of the Case, might excuse, and make it pardonable, if any should attempt to run it down with Tautology.

Let it be only Noted by the Courteous Reader, that the Texts often cited in the Margent are not brought as Doctrinal Proofs, to clear the Truth of what is laid down or opened, but Allusive, or Borrowed Scripture-Expressions, which if you look to the
Text

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Text it self cited, will be found to be taken in a quite different, perhaps sometimes contrary sense : The Reason of which frequent Citation is - only because the Language of the Holy Ghost is most pure, and accompanied with such a secret Penetration that it will make its way, where our own Language finds none. This oftner cometh in the Demonstration of the Spirit, and of Power. The Main Proofs of Doctrine are every where met with in the Body of the Discourse it self, i. e. quoted in the Book, not in the Margent, unless forgetfulness in the Transcribing now and then makes an Exception.

Well, I recommend the following Treatise to the Blessing of the God of Heaven, that it may find faithful Readers to build them up, or be instrumental to make

to the Reader.

make them such, and bring them in
as Guests to his Table, that his House
may be filled with them. I conclude
this Epistolary Entrance with the Hear-
y Desire and Prayer of my Soul, on
the Behalf of such as either this Book
by Providence may be directed to, or
who by the same disposing Providence
may be directed to this Book; and this
shall be the Joy and Crown of one Phil. 4. 1.
that hath adventur'd to cast in his Mite,
to promote the Common Salvation. Jude 3.

Joseph Hussey.

28 SE60

THE

ERRATA.

BY reason of the Author's distance from the Press, various Mistakes are crept in, and therefore

Pag. 4. lin. 28. for certain read *certain*. p. 20. lin. 22. for Christ's Money r. *Christ, Money*. p. 27. l. 28. in the Margent for *Scriptura* r. *Scripturae*. p. 35. in the Margent, dele *ibid.* p. 36. l. 2. for liberal r. *literal*. p. 50. l. 24. for obscure r. *obstrust*. p. 50. in the Marg^t. for *μεμεναμένη* r. *μεμενη*. p. 52. l. 20. for month r. *moneth*. p. 59. l. 18. for great r. *greatest*. p. 78. l. 14. for thro' r. *thro'* p. 86. l. 1. dele *ai*. p. 89. l. ult. for Parádice r. *Paradise*. p. 93. in the Margent, for littérally r. *literally*. p. 93. l. 22. for Leaper r. *Leper*. p. 105. for Epithite r. *Epithete*. p. 113. l. 5. blot out *it* (Tautological) p. 113. l. 18. for Hipócrite r. *Hypocrite*. p. 113. l. 19. dele out (Tautological) p. 123. in the Margent, for *ἀνέστη* r. *ἀνέστη*. p. 124. l. 14. for Jehojachin r. *Jehojachin*. p. 125. l. 8. for month r. *moneth*. p. 145. l. 22. for littérally r. *literally*. p. 148. in the Margent, for *ἐχθέρ* r. *ἐχθέρ* p. 156. in the Margent, for credebile r. *credibile*. p. 161. l. 9. blot out the full stop, and insert a Comma between *Clayth, you, and, Oh, of little Faith*. p. 165. l. 27. for cloath r. *clothe*. p. 166. l. 3. for cloatn r. *cloathe*. p. 168. in the Margent r. *Psal. 44. 21.* over against Line the 8th. p. 180. l. ult. put the Asterism after the full stop. p. 218. in the Margent, for *δαρσα* r. *δαρσα*. p. 231. in the Margent, for *hec* r. *hec*. p. 231. in the Margent. for *Coton* r. *Cotton*. p. 232. in the Margent, for *Refininings* r. *Refinings*. p. 238. in the Margent, for *aurâqu*. r. *aurâque*. p. 253. l. 16. for to r. *do*. p. 278. in the Marg^t. for *μαχαλα* r. *μαχαλα*. p. 300. l. 1. for Fornicators r. *Fornicatours*. p. 307. l. 18. for nevertheliss r. *nevertheless*. p. 315. l. 19. blot out [of the Name] p. 324. l. 4. read refuse to eat Bread. p. 362. in the Margent for *ἐνὶ γὰρ* r. *ἐνὶ γὰρ*. p. 376. in the Margent, for Goodwyn r. *Godwyn*. *ibid.* for Weymse r. *VVeemse*. p. 388. l. 2c. for Inbitants r. *Inhabitants*. p. 398. l. 12. for months r. *moneths*. *ibid.* l. 23. for profitted r. *profised* p. 421. l. 14. for *eff* r. *of*.

THE
Gospel Feast
 OPENED,
 OR THE
Great SUPPER
 of the PARABLE.

LUK. XIV. 17. latter part.

Come, for All things are now ready.



THE Occasion of the whole Parable (beginning at the 16th, and ending with the 24th Verse) appears to be grounded upon an Expression that seems at the First

Taste to be Speech seasoned with Salt, dropt Col. 4. 6.
 from the mouth of a Pharisee that *sate at* Luk. 14. 1.

B

meat

The Gospel-Feast Opened, Or,

meat with Christ, in the House of one of the chief Pharisees. Christ under the Roof of this Pharisee, accompanied with other Pharisees at the Table, and Lawyers, (i. e. not such Civil Lawyers as we have now in the State, but Ecclesiastical Interpreters or Expolitors of the Law of Moses, as the words in the * Original do signifie in all the Evangelists,) had argued many Things concerning Feasts, unto v. 15. and behold in the 15th, one of the Company breaks forth into this Expression, *Blessed is he that shall eat Bread in the Kingdom of God.*

* ὁμοιωσι
and ὁμοιο-
ῶσι
2.01.

† Vid. Poli-
Synop. Cri-
tic. in lo-
cum.

This Great Speech of the Rabbie (who indeed is thought by † Interpreters to have entertained but a gross Notion of the State of Heaven, measuring it chiefly from the outward Dignity and Pomp of Pharisees and Lawyers sitting there, yet) seems to be a Religious Utterance, and looks as if the Speaker had been a Gracious Profelyte, and spoke as one that believed the Truth in Christ, and lied not. But alas! you mistake the scope and sense of this Doctour: he utters fine plausible words without the root of the matter in him, and none of his own saying neither, only he had pickt up a Pro-
verbial

the Great Supper of the Parable.

3

verbial Speech current among the * Rab-
 bines, who drew in faint colours the In-
 visible Things of God by the Pattern of
 Visible, and fancied the gaudy Shine of
 their Long Robes, together with the other
 splendour of such as fared sumptuously eve-
 ry Day, to be a Goodly Draught of Hea-
 ven. We may gather from his Ignorance
 and Disaffection to true Spiritual Things,
 that tho he uses refined Language, yet he
 is no more than an Unrenewed Pharisee:
 for when Christ doth afterwards in the
 Parable propose and set spiritual, cele-
 stial Food, the Bread of the Kingdom of
 God, before him, our Lord seems to find
 no more Faith on the Earth in this Talk-
 ing Zealot, than in any other Pharisee,
 or Lawyer of the Company. The * Scope
 of our Saviour's Parable argues, that
 howsoever these Pharisees (eo nomine)
 might pretend to value the Kingdom of
 God; yet the Love of the World, the
 Profits, Pleasures, secular Employments,
 and Avocations of this Life, would pre-
 vail to keep them off from embracing the
 Calls of God, and shut them out of Hea-
 ven.

* Sententiâ
 crebra a-
 pud Rab-
 binos qui
 re d'opul-
 imagine
 opul-
 pingibant.
 Grotius.

* Mr. Sam.
 Cradock's
 Harmony
 of the E-
 vanglistas

Observe, There may, upon some Occa-
 sions, be Discourses of the Things of God
 that drop from unsanctified Lips, where

the Speakers have no inward Savour or true understanding of those Things. *The Language of Canaan* may be got and us'd by rote, where also men retain the *speech of Ashdod* under their Tongues. A Person like this Pharisee may discourse of the Kingdom of God, and yet be a Child of Disobedience, in whom the god of this World rules.

Neh. 13.
24.

But let me open the 16th Verse, where the Parable begins, and also the former part of the 17th, to bring in the Text.

V. 16.

Then said he.] Christ hereupon takes the Occasion, and replies.

unto, in
the Singu-
lar Num-
ber.

Unto him.] *q. d.* Unto the Pharisee that spake at the 15th Vers. before.

Acts 18.26

Christ observed the Saying, and taking the word out of the mouth of the Pharisee, instructs him by a Parable, that taught the Way of God more perfectly. The other Guests at the Table were silent, but this man spake, and therefore the Son of Man hath somewhat to say unto Him, to state the matters of the Kingdom, and discover how the Pharisees would dislike it, and then reject the King that should reign over them.

Luk. 14.16

A certain man made a great Supper, and bade many.

A certain man.] This Evangelist Luke calls

the Great Supper of the Parable.

5

our
ng calls him indeterminately, describing
and him by no Character or Degree; but
the *Matthew* expresseth whom, and declares
s. How great a man he was, rendring him
our by that certain Preheminence, and Su-
be *Supreme Authority* which met in him: The
go Expression therefore is cloath'd with
Royalty, A certain *King*, or, as the * Ori-
her *Original* reads it, a *man*, a *King*. This was
me one other than the Great God, giving
t. his own Son *Jesus Christ* to be married
ake our Nature, and made like unto us in
Assuming Flesh, when the *Word* was made
the *Flesh*, and dwelt among us. Math. 22. 2
* ἀνθρώ-
πω Γα-
λῆ.

As to the Reason why God is set forth
in this Agency by a *Man* (according to
the *Original* of the Parable in *Matthew*,
and our own *Translation* in *Luke*,) I find
the *Interpreters* silent. However, I think it
may satisfy, to remember, that the Lan-
guage of the Holy Ghost is Sovereign,
and being at Liberty to use what *Idiom*
King Terms he pleaseth; and that he con-
descends and stoops in the Expression to
King Weakness, as he doth in all other
metaphorical Allusions of Scripture else-
where, (*The Eyes of the Lord, his Face,*
his Hands, &c.)

Luke Made a great Supper.] That is, says
call one, Appointed the Grace and Privi-
ledges * Mr. Sam.
Clark An-
not. on the
N. T.

ledges of the Gospel, the Glory and Happiness of Heaven consequent thereupon. He prepared *Grace* for the Benefit of our fallen *Nature*, and *Glory* in the *Second Adam*, when we were recovered out of the Ruines of the *First*.

* ΣΥΤΤΟΝ.

Luk. 14. 16

† Match.

22. 4.

τὸ δεῖπνον

μὲν ἦτο

μασ.

* *A Supper.*] Yet † *Matthew* varies

the *Name*, and calls this Entertainment *Dinner*; Behold I have prepared my *Dinner*. Both mean the Provisions of *Grace* made for Poor sinners, and so agree in the *Substance*, where they vary in the *Cumstance*. It was *Grace* made ready whether we consider it as a *Dinner* in the Worlds *Noon-Day*, when the *Fulness of Time* was come, as soon as God sent forth his *Son*: or whether we consider it near the *Evening* of the World in those Ages that border upon the *Second Coming* of his *Son of Man*,

Gal. 4. 4.

As to the Circumstance of a *Supper*,

1. *Luke* might allude to the usual ordinary time of Entertainments most commonly (perhaps) observed in that Age. We may gather some Evidence out of the Mouth of Two Witnesses to establish it, *Mark* and *John*. — He on his Birth-Day made a *Supper* to his *Lords*, *High Captains*, and chief *Estates* of *Galilee*, *Mark* 6. 21. And when *Jesus* came

the Great Supper of the Parable.

5

to Bethany, there they made him a **Supper**. The Jews were not wont always to treat their Guests, as Joseph did his Brethren, when he told the Egyptians, that these men should **Dine** with him at Noon. And as the Name might be proper in reference to the Jewish Banquets, so the aptitude of the Phrase seems to be further countenanc'd in Scripture from the Practice of the Thing among some Gentiles also. The Apostle leaves it upon record as his Observation among the Greeks, that they that are drunken, are drunken in the night, 1 Thess. 5. 7. The Church at Thessalonica to whom he there writes was planted in Greece, A Drunken soil that was often drown'd by Night; for the Ancients, as a * Learned Man notes, were wont to banquet late, and falling afterwards into Intemperance by drinking Wine long, after they had Supr, were overcome, and drunken with it in the Night. Thô alas! I may note it (obiter) by the way, that now men will be drunk, while it is yet day, quickly after Dinner, before the Night cometh.

* Mr. Joseph Mede. Solebant veteres vespertino Tempore convivio agitari, & mero indolgentes, & multam noctem prodigere.

2. The Evangelist might allude to the Paschal Supper; for the Paschal Lamb was to be slain in the Evening, Exod.

12. 6. and to be eaten the same Night
 The Paschal-Supper typified and shadowed forth our Lord's own Supper instituted afterwards as a Commemoration to shew forth the Lord's Death until he come, and twice called the Lord's Supper; Luk. 22. 20. 1 Cor. 11. 20. Now as the Paschal Supper typified, so this Supper of the Gospel might allude also to the Lord's Supper. For indeed the Lord's Supper, not intended directly in this Parable, is yet comprehended under it *virtually*, by a *Synechdoche*, as the Part is contained in the whole. The Great Supper of the Gospel designs the utmost extent of all Gospel-Grace and Privilege, it reacheth the full Mystery of Godliness, and all spiritual Benefits that redound to any Soul by it. Well, a *Supper* because alluding to the Paschal and the Lords Supper.

3. He might allude to the Future state of Blessedness in Heaven, which is called the *Marriage-Supper of the Lamb*. For indeed the present state of Grace is an Emblem, or a * Foretaste of Heaven. But I think chiefly in the last place, that

4. It alludes very naturally to the *last Dispensation* which we are now under.

The

the Great Supper of the Parable.

9

The *Name* seems to bear a Peculiar reference to the Gospel-Season. What fitter Name than a *Supper* could be given to an Entertainment of Grace now in the Evening of the World? The Days of the Gospel are in Scripture styled peculiarly the *last Days*, 2 Tim. 3. 1. Heb. 1. 2. There is a careful *Father* which provides in Heaven, who will have a Supper for his *Children* upon the Earth in these *last Times*; to *feast* them upon Gospel-Grace, before they go to *Bed*, that is, before the Day of the World, or their own Day ends, when they must go and *rest in their Beds*, each one walking in his *uprightness*. I handle it after this nature in the end of the Discourse.

Isa. 57. 2.

And bade many.] God doth not make Provisions of Grace in vain, or prepare a Great Supper, and then have none to eat it. He sends first to the Seed of *Abraham*, and *bade many* Jews. These had been a long while invited to accept of *Christ*, and be in a readiness to embrace the *Messiah*, as soon as that promised *Seed* came. The Jews had notice of this Approaching Supper very early in the Morning; they had warning at the first *Dawn* of that *Star of Jacob*, to get ready, and come in unto it.

Luk. 14. 16
last words.

Num. 24.
17.

And

The Gospel-Feast Opened, Or,

ὁ υἱός,
v. 17.
* Servum
illum uni-
cum, nempe
Filium Dei.
Poli Sy-
nopf. Cri-
tic. in loc.

And sent his Servant.] That is, (says
* one) sent his only Son whom before
he called his Servant, Isa. 42. 1. Behold
my Servant whom I uphold, mine Elect (or
Chosen) in whom my soul delighteth. This
of whom the Prophet speaketh was none
other than the Christ the Chosen of God,
1 Pet. 2. 4. Thus Luke speaks of no
more than one Servant, (and of him as
the Messenger of the Covenant, who was
also the only Begotten of the Father, full
of Grace and Truth,) but Matthew uses
the Term plurally, Chap. 22. 3. — sent
forth his Servants, i. e. his Ministers and
Ambassadors, after the Mission of his
Son, * to press the same Thing. Luke re-
lates the Parable as Christ was sent in
Person to treat with Sinners, and Mat-
thew writes, as the Ministers of Christ
were employed to come forth afterwards
successively in the same Treaty, even to
the end of the World still inviting Sin-
ners. This two-fold Testimony of Mat-
thew and Luke is not self-contradicting,
or guilty of the least inconsistency : It is
no such Testimony for Christ, as that
was found against him, where neither so
did their Witnesses agree together.

Mar. 14. 59

* τῇ ᾠρῇ
τῷ δείπνῳ.

* At Supper-time.] In the Hour of Sup-
per, it is read. Christ came out of the
Bosom

the Great Supper of the Parable.

11

Bosom of the Father in the *Time of Love* to Souls, and the Dispensation of the Gospel is that Supper-season in which Christ is now given and sent by the Father to treat, in the Ministry of the Word with Sinners: This is the *Hour* when the Gospel is made ready; This is the *Evening-Time* at which we may find that all is ready drest, and waits for Guests to come. The Readiness of the *Things* is not delay'd beyond the *Supper Hour*.

To say to them that were bidden.] As they had been before invited, so now the Servant is sent to inform them 'tis *High-Time* to come. And therefore the Message is,

Come.] This supposeth a Distance, which they that are bidden stand in to God; he sends a Call to overtake such as were yet *afar off*. The Grace of God did once find all that are now in Christ so, Eph. 2. 13. *But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were afar off, are made nigh by the Blood of Christ.* And as there was a Distance in such as are now made nigh, so there is a mighty Distance still in the *All that are afar off, even the many that the Lord our God shall call.* Now the Gospel-Invitation which supposeth a Distance

Acts 2. 39.

The Gospel-Feast Opened, Or,

Distance from God, begins with a Call unto him, *Come.*

For all things are ready.] Not a Privilege, not an Encouragement, not any kind of Gospel Grace excepted. Dost thou want Pardon, Peace, Light, Strength, Joy in the Lord? yet *whatever thy Soul lusteth after*, who cryest after God, it is all ready for thee, *Come.* Here is a *Rich Feast*, refuse no longer to be a *Poor Guest.* Here is *All*, and *All* will be *enough* for thee. Where is the Tongue of that

Pla. 78.19. *Israelite that cryed out, Can God furnish a Table in the Wilderness?* Who can question the Power of *Jehovah* to prepare a Table, when they see all Provisions ready? And

Now ready.] The Supper of the Gospel is no such Banquet as requires any further care to make it. The Law indeed *made nothing perfect*, but the Gospel needs no higher or clearer Revelations to perfect its own Discoveries. God Heb. 1.2. *hath in these last dayes spoken to us by his Son*, but from the Beginning, when he multiplied Visions, and used Signs, and revealed his Counsels in Dark Speeches, then it was not so. The Provisions were reserved in store, and he hath kept the good Wine untill now.

the Great Supper of the Parable.

13

In the Words there are, I

1. Plentiful Provisions made. All things ready. II

2. An Invitation made unto Sinners, to partake of these things. Come. III

3. A quickning Motive urg'd from the Season of Readiness, to prevail with the Guests to come. Now ready. VI
V

IV

I shall endeavour accordingly to manage the Discourse under these three Doctrines: IV
III

Doct. The Gospel is a large Feast, stor'd with all kinds of Spiritual Provision in it. I
I

Doct. God makes an Invitation unto Sinners to come in to this Feast. II

Doct. The Gospel is a Feast or Supper that hath all its Provisions now ready. III

Doct. The Gospel is a large Feast, stor'd with all kinds of Spiritual Provision in it. I
All things ready.

In the Management of this Doctrine I would handle it in the following Method, under these Nine general things. To shew

Wherein

- I. Wherein the *Resemblance* of the Gospel to a *Feast* appears.
- II. In what respect it is a *large Feast*.
- III. What Things we have need of against the *Feast*.
- IV. What is the *Bill of Fare*.
- V. What *excellent Properties* there are in the Provisions of this Great Supper.
- VI. What *suitableness* from God appears in them to the *Cafe of Man*.
- VII. *Why* it is a *Feast* with all things in it.
- VIII. What *Hindrances* do make it to many ineffectual.
- IX. *To Apply* it.

I. The *First* Thing is to open the *Resemblance* of the Gospel unto a *Feast*.

I. Resemblance.

III

Dr. Tho. Fuller, Pif-gah-fight, p. 134. 1st. pt.

First, The Gospel resembles a *Feast* in the *entireness* of it. A *Feast* doth not consist in *one kind*, to yield *Meat* only, and withhold *Drink*, or to afford *Drink* and not provide *Meat*; but it makes *Both* ready, *Esculents* and *Beverage* too, as one terms them. The *Feast* is not *incomplete*, if either part be *wanting*. Thus, in the *Gospel*, the *Provisions of Grace* are made in both kinds ready, that we need *take no Thought* as to any *Defect* there, either *what we shall eat*,

the Great Supper of the Parable.

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at, or what we shall drink in God's Kingdom, for we have them both provided: He dealeth his Bread to the hungry, and giveth Waters in the Wilderness, to give Drink to his People, his chosen. When Wisdom entertaineth her Friends, they do not live by halves, she gives them all together, Prov. 9. 5. Eat of the Bread, and drink of the Wine which I have mingled. Wine. He can turn Water into Wine to create variety. Again, Eat that which is good, Isa. 55. 2. lat. part. And if any Man thirst, let him come unto me and drink, Joh. 7. 37. The Gospel discovers no Imperfection, for tho' it be true, as to the Ceremonial Preparations in Moses, yet it doth not hold in respect of the Evangelical Provisions in Christ, that the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink. It is a whole Feast, and therefore in its entireness is like such an Entertain-
ment.

Isa. 58. 7.
chap. 43.
20.

Rom. 14.
17.

Both Secondly, The Gospel resembles a Feast as in the Delicacies and Fatness of it. Entertainments are wont to be made of the best the House affords. Abraham in Entertaining of the three Angels, could he have gotten it, would have given them as Angels Food; however, he Order'd it to be prepared of the choicest Morsels, and would

2 Resemblance.

would make it as delicate as he could to bring it before his Guests. 'Tis said *Gen. 18. 6.* He hastned into the Tent to Sarah and said, Make ready quickly three measures of **fine Meal**, and he ran (himself) unto the Herd, *V. 7.* and fetcht a Calf, ('tis not said to be an ordinary one, but) **tender and good**, and gave it unto a young man, and he hastned to dress it, and he took **Butter and Milk**, *V. 8.* the best Ingredients to serve it in with, when he set it before the Men, as they are also called, *v. 2.* Esau likewise, when Isaac his Father bespoke that Entertainment for himself, *Gen. 27. 3, 4.* is directed by his Father, to go out, and take of the Dainties the Field afforded: *Take now I pray thee, thy Weapons, thy Quiver and thy Bow, and go out unto the Field, and take me some Venison, and make me laboury meat, such as I love, and bring it to me, that I may eat —*

Thus, the Gospel is furnished with the choicest Viands, and God's Servants behold an excellency in the very Crumbs which fall from their Masters Table. The King doth not slay any *lean Kine*, but in making ready for the Marriage, his Oxen and his Fatlings are killed, *Matth. 22. 4.* When God makes Provision,

his

his Paths drop Fatness; it is no common Psal. 65. 11.
 Furniture, which is found on his Table.
 He hath the Best of all sorts there. He
 hath not brought that which is torn,
 and the lame and the sick to Us, tho'
 we have brought such a maimed, sick
 Offering to him: when he gives us of
 the Corn of Heaven, it is not Cockle in- Job. 31. 40.
 stead of Barley, but also with the Fi- Psal. 81. 16.
 nest of the wheat he feeds us. The
 Blessings of this Gospel-Feast could be
 set forth by no higher or richer Ex-
 pressions than a Feast of Fat Things,
 and of Wines on the Lees well refined, which
 comprehends the Delicacies of a Feast
 in the best of Meats and the choicest
 Drinks, see *Isa. 25. 6.* And in this moun-
 tain (that is, the Mount Sion in Jerusa-
 lem, upon which the Temple or House of
 the Lord stood) shall the Lord of Hosts
 make unto all People a Feast of Fat Things,
 a Feast of Wines on the Lees; of fat Things
 full of Marrow, of wines on the Lees well
 refined. I know * some do make this * Day up-
 Feast of Fat things to signifie the Affri- on that
 ans slain, and Wine on the Lees to re- place.
 present the Effusion of their Blood,
 which in that slaughter God would shed * Mr. p. 2.
 round about Jerusalem. But * others do English An-
 more notations.

more probably interpret it of "A Feast made up of the most exquisite and delicate Provisions, which is manifestly meant, says a great Author, of the Ordinances, Graces and Comforts given by God in and to his Church. And indeed the Fat of God's Sacrifices which were appointed under the Law, and should be offered again upon that Mountain after the Captivity, doth seem aptly to point at the Dainties of the Gospel, even as the Law Ceremonies did to typifie the State of the Gospel, or as Mount Sion and Jerusalem to shadow out the Church. The Fat of their Meat Offerings, and the Vinous Juice, or Wine of their Drink Offerings, were no obscure Emblem of the Gospel-Feast, and seem plainly by the Evangelical Prophet to foretell this great Supper. It is represented by *Fatness* to intimate that nothing ordinary, or of a low Account is in it: It is not such *course Fare* as Melchizedek gave those four Children, Daniel, Hananiah, Michael, and Azariah, when he took away the Portion of their Meat, and the Wine that they should drink, and gave them Pulse; nor as ordinary as Jacob gave Esau in the Potrage of Lentiles.

Dan. 1. 16.

Gen. 25. 34

Lentiles. The Gospel hath nothing coarse or common, but rare and extraordinary. Such as God hath *fed*, have *fared sumptuously every Day*, beyond the Rich Glutton. The *Israelites* had Quails and Mannah in the Desert, God brought them *Rich Provision* in a *Hungry Place*; and an *Israelite* indeed still finds Dainties, *Isa. 55. 2. Let your Soul delight it self in Fatness.* The Shepherd of Israel that provideth will take his *Flock*, and feed them in a good Pasture. Luk. 16. 19

Thirdly, The Gospel resembles a Feast in the *Freemts of it.* Feasts are Free, tho' they are Chargeable to the *Founder*, yet the *Guests* are wont to partake at *Free-cost* in them. *Joseph's Brethren* indeed may think of no other Provision than what they *buy*, but when they come into *Egypt*, they shall find *Joseph* will give them their *Diet free.* *Jacob's Sons* may *carry down the Man a Present*, a little *Balm*, and a little *Honey*, *Spices and Myrrh*, *Nuts and Almonds*, *Gen. 43. 11.* and *take Double-money* in their Hand, *v. 12.* but when the *Steward of Egypt* entertains them, he will throw their *Money back*: His *Servants* shall *slay*, and *make ready*, and let his *Fathers House* bring Ezek. 34. 14.
3 Resemblance.

bring what they will to pay, these Men shall Dine with him for *nothing*, v. 16. They like *Traffiquers* may bring in the Bag, and talk hard of *buying* with their Money, when *Joseph's* Back is turn'd, but they shall find he hath left Orders with his Steward not to meddle with it, v. 19, 20, 21, 22, 23. Peace be unto you, fear not, your God and the God of your Father hath given you treasure; I had your Money. q. d. "My Master Ordered me to convey it privately in-
 "to your Sacks, and send it home a-
 "gain; he Orders your Entertainment
 "gratis, and bestows all upon you free-
 "ly: He will not allow it, that you
 "should live upon your own Purse in
 "Egypt.

So likewise in the Gospel, Sinners are prone by *Nature* to bring something of their *own*, and make *exchange* with *Christ's* Money, the Work of their Hands to purchase Grace, and buy a little Food of him. But if our *Joseph* nourish us, he will take our Sacks *empty*; we must bring them to *Jesus* without Money in them; his House is Free, we may Dine or Sup with Him for nothing; it is

Cant. 3. 1. Eat, O Friends, and drink abundantly, O Beloved,

Beloved, but still without Money and without Price, Isa. 55. 1. The Lord draws out his Soul unto the Hungry, tho' the Hungry cannot draw their Purse. The Gospel yields no such Bread, as we must not eat till we work and earn it. Tho' a Poor Soul should cry out in another sense with Peter, *Silver and Gold have I none*, yet Act. 3. 6. wherein dos this Poverty exclude from his Table, at a Feast where Christ hath paid for all? Thou hast all given in for nothing, and shalt never hear of a Bill of Charges to be brought and laid to thine account: tho' Christ bids thee buy Wine Isa. 55. 1. and Milk, it doth not suppose thou canst drop a Farthing for it; for it is He that hath no Money, yet encouraged to buy and eat: The Holy Ghost seems to use that Language which men are first prone to take up themselves, *Come, buy*; whereas it is only meant, they should take what is bought already for them. Christ, as † one says, never sells dear to the Poor. Free Grace will have no Pay but Thanks. † Mr. Obadiah Sedgwick, Fountain Opened. p. 214. Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable Gift, 2 Cor. 9. 15. We have no self-worthiness in our best Estate; we could never move or oblige the King to feast such as we at supper. The Lord's Bounty in feasting

us, was to *make* us Good, not as any Reward, because he *found* us so. Tho' in our Flesh there dwelleth no Good Thing, yet when his Spirit furnisheth our House, he doth not *ask*, or will ever *take* a Farthing; tho' his Supper cost him more than *millions*, we need not lay out one *mite* upon it.

4 Resemblance.

Luk. 22.
31.

Fourthly, The Gospel resembles a Feast in regard of the *Place of Entertainment*. Feasts are not made abroad *sub Dio* in the open Air, or got ready in the *Markets*: Things are *sold*, but they are not *eaten* in the *Shambles*. — *The Master saith, Where is the Guest-Chamber, where I shall eat the Passover with my Disciples?* The Provisions are at *home*, i. e. where the Master dwelleth, and to be had in his *Presence*, at his *House* alone; The Guests must not be found in *other Houses*, but where the *Master* of the Entertainment dwells. So in Things pertaining to the *Gospel*, the Provisions of the Grace of God do not ly in *Shops* and in *Shambles*, among our *selves*, but *look unto Me and be ye saved*, Isa. 45. 22. In buying and selling, we go only to our *own Place*, but in receiving the Gospel, we are come to *his Dwelling-place*

the Great Supper of the Parable.

23

place in *Sion*. The Things of this Life are Pfal. 76.2.
without-Doors, but if we taste of *his Sup-*
per, we must eat it *within his Holy Place*,
 that is, we must be brought *at least in-*
to the Church Universal. If we remain
off from the Family, we shall come at
no Food in it; it is under *Their Roof*,
 that we partake of *Their Repast*. Grace
 is not to be found out of its own *Circle*,
 and *Nature* finds out nothing but *De-*
struction on the *other side*: if we are
 fed, it must not be with the *Wild Beasts*
 of the *Forrest*, but the *Sheep* in *Christ's*
Fold. If we have meat, we must not
 wander *abroad*, but walk *within the Pale*
 of the * *Church*. There is no favour to
 be shewn us from the *King*, if we keep
 away from *Conrt*, no *Priviledge* of *God's*
Subjects, but in the *Kingdom* of *Grace*,
 which is *not of this World*. As *Paul* said
 unto the *Centurion* and the *Mariners*, Acts 27.31
Except ye abide in the Ship, ye cannot be sa-
ved; so unless you be with the *Master*
 of the *Feast*, *this is not to eat the Supper* I Cor. 11.
 of the *Parable*. It is necessary that we 20.
 be of the *Body*, to obtain a *Relation* to
 the *Head*, and that we be *Members* to
 possess our *Place* among them. *Provi-*
sion is not to be every where had;

* Extra
Ecclesiam
nulla salus.

but as we must have our Place at a *man's* own Habitation, if we taste of the Bounty and Generosity he shews in his House, so we must be set in the *True Church* with Christ, to receive our Bread, and drink of our Cup at his Hand.

's Resem-
blance.

Fifthly, The Gospel resembles a Feast **in limiting its Provisions**. Feasts are not *common*, unexcepted Entertainments to make *all* men Guests. Such as are treated *themselves* at the Master's House, do not there meet with *every one* they know. A *man* may be at a Feast, where some of his *own House* are *Strangers*, whom he never finds there. One that hath lain in his own *Bosom*, one that hath sprung from his own *Bowels*, may *Sup* in *another* place. It is not strange then, if a man finds not the whole *Neighbourhood*, or all that dwell *near* him, at the Gospel supping by him. *I will take you one of a City, and two of a Family, and I will bring you to Zion, Jer. 3. 14.* Nay, the wonder will abundantly lessen still, that the *multitude* should be excluded Feasting at the Master's House. 'Tis no strange Thing, that a *Greater company* than the Guests are walking thro' the *Streets*, or riding thro' the *Town*,
and

Latter
part.

and all passing by the Door, whom the Good man of the House takes no notice of. His *Dinner* or his *Supper* is ready for them alone that are *bidden*, whom he hath sent to *call in*. The Grace of God in like manner *that bringeth Salvation* is manifested and declared by himself, that it doth not extend to *all*; Multitudes go by, that are neither *called*, nor yet *come in*. Some have not the Knowledge of God, 1 Cor. 15. 34. some again know him, and yet *in works deny him*, Tit. 1. 16. They are *called*, i. e. the Preaching of the Gospel calls upon them, and they *profess* to go unto the Marriage, but are like the Son that was sent into the Vineyard, who said, *I go Sir*, and went not. Others may accidentally be mingled with the Holy Seed, but *eat and drink not* in God's Kingdom, who yet may be *Strangers*, and no *Guests*, Men and not *Christians*; for many are called, but Few are chosen, Matth. 20. 16. Chap. 22. 14. As God *winks*, when he pleaseth, at the Times of Ignorance, looks over them, as the * word signifies, so he may look on the Times when more enlightened, and destroy, as he pleaseth, the Wisdom of the wise, and bring to nothing the Understanding

Tit. 2. 11.

Matth. 21. 28.

V. 30.

Act. 17. 30.
* *ὑμεῖς*
ὑμεῖς

Isa. 29.14. derstanding of the *Prudent*. God's Peo-
 1 Cor. 1.19. ple *fare well* by themselves, while others
 are fatted for the Day of Slaughter, and
 never come in to sup with them. The Lord
 severs between the one and the other, in
 reference to the true *Gospen*-state, as he
 did heretofore between the Cattel of *Is-*
 Exod. 9.4. *rael* and the Cattel of *Egypt*. The *Friends*
 of the Bridegroom hear his Voice, when
 Prov. 14.10 a *Stranger* doth not intermeddle.

1 Cor. 1.21 I know the *Foolishness* of Preaching
 and Man's corrupt *Wisdom* in this Point
 do no ways agree. Corruption is more
 tender of its own Deformed *Brow*, than
 of the *Apple* of God's Eye, his *Sovereign-*
ty. *Nature* is too high to stoop, tho'
 to the God of Nature, here. This is a
 * *Knee* that will not bow to *Jesus*. * *Cal-*
 * *Ambrosi-* *vin* has noted it concerning some of the
 * *us, Origenes,*
 * *Hierony-*
 * *mus censu-*
 * *erunt, Deum*
 * *suam Gra-*
 * *tiam inter*
 * *Homines*
 * *dispensare*
 * *prout ea*
 * *quenque be-*
 * *ne usurum*
 * *pr. viderit.*
 * *Calvin: In-*
 * *sist. Cbr.*
 * *Rel. p. 320.*
 * *§. 8, initio.*
 Ancient *Fathers*, as *Ambrose*, *Origene* and
Hierome, that they supposed, God distri-
 buted his Grace no otherwise amongst
 men, than as he *forefaw* the Improve-
 ment which men would make of it, and
 the Good use they would put that Grace
 to: And adds, that *Augustine* too was
 some while of the same mind, but after-
 wards when he grew into a better Ac-
 quaintance with the Scriptures, he not
 only

only *retracted* that corrupt Opinion, but *confuted* it with great Strength of Argument, as his words declare in the * Margent. Men may throw his Glory whither they list, but God will never give it away himself. The King will be Sovereign in his House, and have none to sup, but whom he sends for. Thou wouldst not, Oh man, thy self, and who art thou that repliest against God? Is it fit for Thee; and shall it not be Lawful for Him to do what he will with his own? (Rom. 9. 20. Matth. 20. 15.)

* Adde & Augustinum in eâ fuisse aliquando Sententiâ; sed cum melius in Scriptura cognitione profecisset, non retractavit modo ut evidenter falsam, sed fortiter confutavit. Ibid. (mibi) Octavo.

Sixthly, The Gospel resembles a Feast in the Order of the Guests that are plac'd to eat and drink in Gods Kingdom. In Feasts it is usual for some to sit *higher*, others *lower* at the same Entertainment. This is intimated to have been observed among the Jews at Feasts, Luk. 14. 8, 9, 10. where, Christ *condemns* not such a Civil Order but therein *countenanceth* the Degrees of respect that may be shewn among Men, while he maketh an outward Difference between the *Honourable* and the *Base*. It is thus at Our Tables, some are *nearer*, some are *farther* the upper end than others. Some are plac'd more advantageously by the very Man of the House, where

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- where they have the opportunities of a Freer converse with him, and a nearer intimacy than *another that sitteth by*. *Sam. 9. 22* *Samuel* took *Saul* and his Servant, and made them sit in the *chiefest* place among them that were bidden, where they were more Honourable than the Thirty. So in the Gospel, we may see how God spiritually makes a Difference, while of his Sovereignty, for the Beauty and Order of the Church, he makes one to *differ from another*. Indeed it is not our Business, or ought herein to be our care, to *mark out the chief Rooms*, or the *uppermost Seats in Synagogues* (like the Pharisees); for *2 Cor. 5. 16* *Christ knows no man after the Flesh*, that is, he doth not respect the *man* for his Natural Precedency, or Primogeniture, who *cometh to our Assembly with the Gold Ring, or in Goodly Apparel*, and much beyond the *Poor man that cometh in in vile Rayment*: It is not therefore as to Civil Difference or External Order according to the Flesh, which common Providence hath made among Professors, that I here assume the Parallel, but in a *Spiritual Discrimination of Gifts and Graces*, or manifestations of the Divine Presence to some more than others. The order lyes in

n' that. *There are Diversities of Gifts,* 1 Cor. 12. 4
Differences of Administrations, diversities of v. 5. v. 6.
Operations: God's People have neither e-
 qual Gifts, nor equal Graces. As the
Sun of Righteousness variously shines, so
 one *Star* will always differ from another
 Star in Glory. Some partake of more,
 some taste of less, when Christ *putteth* of
 his Spirit upon them that sit under his sha- Mal. 4. 2.
 dow. He gives more out of his * Treas- Canr. 2. 3.
 ures in wisdom to some, in strength to o- * Col. 2. 3.
 thers; they receive not alike of his * Ful- * Joh. 1. 16.
 ness. There be Differences in the Expe-
 riences of God's People, a higher and a
 lower, a Right hand and a Left at the
 King's Table. Lo! to one he saith, *Friend,*
go up higher, q. d. "Thou shalt behold Luk. 14. 10
 me, thou shalt by Faith apprehend me
 more, and taste me sweeter than ano-
 ther that hath not thy Experience, and
 yet he shall receive a Portion of me too.
 Some have greater Communications of
 the Love of God than others. Some are
 in the Dark, others walk so much in the
 Light of Gods Countenance, that, like
 Moses, they are got into the Mount, and
 seem to converse with God Face to Face.
 The Influences of the Spirit may shine
 upon one Believer with a comfortable
 Light,

Light, and a Gracious, clear Evidence while *another* lyes darkned under some *Eclipse*, by the *Cloud* that cometh betwixt. God's *Children* are all at *Table* but they cannot all look up, at *Supper*, and see their *Father* every one alike. Peradventure, God hath done more for thee than others, thou art quickned with a larger sense, and a more lively Hope, thou art train'd up in thy Father's House under more intimate Acquaintance, Gracious Discoveries, more Ravishing Contemplations than another in the same Congregation that sits down sighing by thee. It is thus, under the Administrations of Grace among the Guests unto our God. They are plac't in order, there are (thro' a manifold Dispensation) Elder and Younger Brethren, and God will have them to sit at meat accordingly.

Gen. 43. *the First-born* (perhaps) according to his Birth-right, and the youngest according to his Youth. However, the King observe what order (only an order), he will have

Mat. II. 26. at this Marriage-Supper, even so Father because it seemeth good in thy sight. All his by the Blood of Christ are nigh in their Relation, but yet as to the manifestations of his Free Love, many may seem

seem to sit down at Table a great way off. The Gospel is a long Table, and there be many Degrees of Grace and Comfort where the Guests sit down. Some may be cast down, others *advanc't* as high as the upper end of Assurance, even to *lean upon Christ's Breast at Supper*. The Church of God hath *Fathers and strong men in Christ*, and the same hath *Babes*, and young Converts, *little Children*, newly brought forth. There are *Old Disciples*, and also such as are *born out of due time*. There are such as are in ** Christ before*, and others that are *less esteemed in the Church*. So that the Gospel may be likened unto an Entertainment in respect of Order.

Severally, The Gospel resembles a Feast in the Ministerial Waiters and Attenders on it. The Queen of Sheba being entertain'd in the Court of Solomon, takes notice not only of the meat of his Table, and the sitting of his Servants; (or Nobles and Courtiers of State, whom he treated and brought up in Familiarity with him) but also of the Attendance of his Ministers, that is, his waiting Servants, and his Cup bearers. Great Tables must have great Attendance on them. The Chief Butler gave the Cup

into

Joh. 21. 20.

1 Joh. 2. 13.

Act. 21. 16.

1 Cor. 15. 8.

* Rom. 16.

7.

1 Cor. 6. 4

7 Resemblance.

1 King. 10.

v. 5.

Gen. 40. 21.

into *Pharaoh's Hand*, and *Nehemiah* was
 Nch. 1. 11 the *King's Cup-bearer*. So the *Marriage*
 Joh. 2. 1, 2. *Feast in Cana of Galilee*, where *Jesus* also
 was present, had its *waiters* attending on
 v. 5. it; for the *Mother of Jesus* saith unto the
 v. 7. *Servants*, and *Jesus* himself commands
 them, *Fill the water-pots with water, and*
 v. 8. *draw out now, and bear unto the Governor*
of the Feast. The *Guests* in the *Marriage*
House were not put to serve themselves.

Now the *Feast of the Gospel* resembles it, and is alike in this, having its
Officers and *Ministerial Waiters* serving
 1 Cor. 9. 13 at the *Altar*; these indeed in one sense
 are of them that sit at the *Table* with
 you, but in another, they are properly
 of them that serve, and therefore your
Servants for *Jesus* sake, 2 Cor. 4. 5.
 When *Ministers* have done one part of
 their work, that is, have called the
Guests, the *Master* appoints the other
 part, to come in and wait at *Table*.
 Hence it is, that we are called *Stewards*
of the mysteries of God, 1 Cor. 4. 1. no
 other *Rulers* over his *Household*, than to
 give them their *Portion of meat in due sea-*
 Luk. 12. 42 *son*. The *Gospel* is a *Table* at which
Ministers must wait, and work too, to
 serve the *Lords Guests*. They ought to
 have

have no place to *stand*, or sit down in near the Table *idle*. The Provisions made ready find work enough for Ministers to *divide the Word aright*, and give 2 Tim. 2. 15. last words. unto every one a proper Portion. We are but menial Servants of *Jesus Christ*, to bring in the Dishes, carve out the Food, and in Applications hand it down to you. The Gospel must be opened by such as *we*, and its Provisions allowed you thro' our Ministry. The Lord of the Feast hath appointed the *Attendance of his Ministers* and his Cup-bearers in a Resemblance to other Feasts.

Eighthly, The Gospel resembles a 8 Resemblance. Feast in the *Cheerfulness of the Guests* that feed upon it. Feasts are not wont to be sad, nor the Guests thereof melancholly. So long as the *Harp and the Viol, the Tabret and Pipe and Wine are in their Feasts*, Isa. 5. 12. (as the Jews used to have such Musical Instruments and Diversion mixed with them.) They are filled up with cheerfulness, and make *Samuel's* 1 Sam. 9. 22. Parlour differ from the House of Mourning. Feasting and Gladness go by couples, *Esth. 9. 17, 18*. And *Solomon* who knew what it was to *prove his Heart with* Eccl. 10. 19 mirth, saith, a Feast is made for Laughter,

* *Ubi sese
Lætitie ob-
tulit occasio.*
Mercer.

† *Mr. Pools*
Engl. An-
not.

ter, and wine maketh merry. For Laugh-
ter] that is for it, as the occasion * of-
fers. The innocent Design and Effect of
Feasting may be a Refreshment of the
Mind by the † Society of Friends, as well
as the Body by the use of Creatures.
Those publick Festivals, *Zech. 8. 19.*
after the sorrow of the Captivity was
turned into Joy, are called *Cheerful*
Feasts: as if a *sorrowful* Feast had been
a contradiction, both to the Nature of
the Thing, and the Letter of a Com-
mand too, *Thou shalt rejoyce in thy Feast,*
Dent. 16. 14. So that neither in their
common or Religious Feasts they were
ever wont to *afflict their Souls.*

And in this respect of cheerfulness, the
Gospel retains the Similitude of a Feast.
God hath kept such an open House un-
der the Gospel-State to enlarge our *steps,*
that we may rejoyce to run our *Race.*
There are indeed some *Hannah's, of a sor-
rowful Spirit,* that sit at Gods Table;
and this doth not proceed, because they
have *eaten their meat* with Him, but thro
Fear they have *drunk poyson* by them-
selves. However, tho *Samson's Wife*
should weep before him the seven Days
while their Feast lasted, yet we do not
read

Judg. 14. 17

read in that Marriage-Banquet, that others besides her did eat the Bread of Mour- Hof. 9. 4.
 ners. So, as to the Gospel, if some are dejected in the House of Feasting, yet the Guests do mostly eat their Bread with joy, and drink their wine with a merry Heart, because God accepteth them. It is Eccl. 9. 7.
 a Musical * Feast of Trumpets that sound * Lev. 23.
 glad Tydings. Besides, this Spiritual 24.
 Pleasure in God's House is the Fruit of a Num. 29. 1
 Gracious Promise, that was to be made good under the Gospel, Isa. 12. 3. With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of Salvation ; yea, he doubly fulfills the Promise, while at the Marriage-Supper, together with our water, he makes our Conduits run wine. The House of Prayer was to be also made the House of Praise — Them will I bring to my Holy Mountain, and make them joyful in my House of Prayer, Isa. 56. 7. The Children of Zion in coming to the Marriage of the King's Son, were foretold should be joyful in their King, Psal. 149. 2. The Gospel is a joyful Feast, of which he that truly eateth, shall one Day truly praise the Lord.

Ibid.

Lastly, The Gospel resembles a Feast in the distribution of it's Broken meat among

9 Resemblance.

others that are *not the called Guests*. We read in those *Liberal Entertainments* with which Christ sometimes treated the Multitudes, when he *multiplied the Loaves*, and fed many thousands with them, that *they took up of the broken meat that was left, seven Baskets full*, Matth. 15. 37. and *twelve Baskets full of the fragments*, and of the *Fishes*, when he entertained them miraculously again, Mar. 6. 43. These Baskets of the Fragments (or * Broken meat, as the word signifies) that remained over and above unto them that had eaten, might perhaps be distributed among others that had not partook of the Meal with them. It is customary now a-days with such as are given to *Hospitality*, to distribute some of the Remainders of a Feast, even to such for whom it is not prepared, being neither invited with the Guests, nor sitting in the same Room among them, only come in upon their own account, or, as we say, occasionally. Indeed *Nabal* at the entertaining of his Sheep-shearers deny'd such a Courtesie as this, when *David* and his men begg'd it; *Shall I take my Bread and my water, and my flesh that I have killed for my Shearers, and give it unto men whom*

* *Fragmen-
ta à fran-
gendo.*

1 Sam. 25.
11.

I know not whence they be ? Yet the Bounty and Kindness of a Good man extendeth sometimes even to them that he knows not whence they are, and when he calleth together his Friends and his Neighbours, is not forgetful, as the case may stand, to entertain Strangers also.

Now the Gospel resembles a Feast in this. God hath made it indeed for his Friends, and had not prepar'd it, if he had not design'd it as an Entertainment to treat *them*, and *they* only are capable to understand *the Wisdom of God in a Mystery*, for the inward Glory and Saving Benefit and vertue of it is *hidden* from other men ; *Therefore speak I to them in Parables, because they seeing, see not ; and hearing, they hear not, neither do they understand*, Matth. 13. 13. Yet however it first happens thro' the common Bounty and Goodness of the Feast-maker, that he *sends Portions* (tho' it be in Parables) *to them for whom nothing is prepared*. If *Benignity* did not prevail, Strangers should not have so much as *Broken meat*. God made *Ezekiel a Lovely Song* to a company of *Deaf Adders*, that would not hear the *Charmers* voice. The outward Parts and Priviledges of the Gospel are

1 Cor. 2. 7.

Neh. 8. 10.

Ezek. 33
32.

dispensed in the *outward*, as well as the *inner Court*, to *Forreigners* as well as *Friends* in the Household of our God. *The Sons of the Alien* that have no Portion in *David*, may yet have some of the Priviledges of *David's House*, and God may rain down *Manna* in the Gospel, as he does common *Rain* from Heaven, *upon the just* and upon the *unjust both*. They that are *Bastards*, and not *Sons* (as the Apostle distinguisheth) may receive, as to Priviledge, some Portion in the *Childrens meat*, and *Dogs* may receive the *Scraps*, and gnaw a *Bone* or a *Crust*, and lick up the *Crumbs that fall from their master's Table*. God may throw in some *common Blessings* of the Gospel to *Unbelievers*, while the Lot of his *special Favour* is cast into his *People's Lap* only. The *one* may have *so much* of the Word, as to *hear the Gospel-sound*, but the *other* only have *All*, and find *Salvation* by it.

Matth. 5.

45.

Heb. 12.8.

Matth. 15.

27.

II. The Second Thing is, in what respects it is a *Large Feast*.

I. *First*, It is large, *if we count the Cost*. It cost the *Life* of the *Kings's Son* to buy it. The *Bridegroom* dyes, before he could get his *Bride* a *Supper* ready. The
Pur-

Purchaser gave himself, Eph. 5. 25. Himself for *Viſtuals*, that ſhe might be entertained, when her Lord ſhould come in and ſup with her. Forasmuch as ye know Rev. 3.20. that ye were not redeemed with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold — But with the Precious Blood of Chriſt, 1 Pet. 18, 19. Ye redeemed.] When Chriſt bought up *Viſtuals*, he bought the *Guests* too that eat it, 1 Cor. 6. 20. Ye are bought with a Price. — not redeemed with corruptible Things, as Silver and Gold.] Chriſt did not bring ſo low a *Treasure*, as will ſerve in other *Markets*; he had no *Coin* but was a Price beyond any *Purse* to hold. The *Banquet* of the *Gospel* could not be gotten lower. I may ſay hereof, as *Job* ſpeaks of *Wiſdom*, it cannot be gotten for Gold, neither ſhall Silver be weighed for the Price thereof; it cannot be valued with the Gold of *Ophir*, with the precious *Onyx* or the *Sapphire*: The Gold and the *Chryſtal* cannot equal it, and the exchange of it ſhall not be for *Jewels* of fine Gold, no mention ſhall be made of *Coral*, or of *Pearls*: for the Price (of the Entertainment) is above *Rubies*: the *Topaz* of *Ethiopia* ſhall not equal it, neither ſhall it be valued with pure Gold. It is corruptible

Job 28.15.

v. 16.

v. 17.

v. 18.

v. 19.

Silver and Gold, but *Precious Blood* (that was Price enough to buy it.) Every Drop of the *Blood of Christ* was a greater Sum than Thousands of Gold and Silver. Christ went to *Market* in the Garden, and then on to the *Shambles* upon the Cross. He was made a *Curse*, that we might have the *Blessing*. The *First Adam* eat Bread *himself* in the sweat of his Face, but the *Second Adam* with Great Drops of Blood procured Bread for us. Now this makes it so great a Feast, that Christ hath with so great a Sum obtain'd it. Silver and Gold will ransom a *King*, but it must be the Blood of Christ to redeem a *Beggar*.

Gen. 3. 19

Luk. 22. 44

Jesus
sweat
drops of
Blood.

2. Secondly, It is large in regard of the *Occasion*. It is a magnificent, stately Supper, because made at the Marriage of the King's Son; Royal Cheer, because Earth is married to the Royal Line of Heaven. You shall not find it like an ordinary, every Day's meal, when you are come to a Wedding-Court to sup. The *Day of our Esponsals* is such a solemn *Time of Love*, that the Father Proclaims, *It is meet that we should make merry*. The Gospel is the *Day of our King*, *Hos. 7. 5.* and he will have his *Coronation* kept.

Luk. 15. 32

rev'd

Tho'

the Great Supper of the Parable.

41

Tho' Sions King is * meek, and therefore comes with no such Majesty, as the Princesses of this World, because his Kingdom is not of it, yet the Kingdom of God cometh not without *spiritual* observation; tho' he doth not assume an *outward* Glory, yet he will have a Feast suitable to the high Occasion, that is *all Glorious within*. We read of Great Things in *Cana* of Galilee, where Jesus was called to the Marriage; *what mighty works then are they which do shew forth themselves in him, when he comes about his own Marriage.* This Supper is made an exceeding great and large Feast, to *greaten* the Day in which thy Maker is thy Husband. If Abraham took Occasion to make a Great Feast the same Day that Isaac was weaned, what an Occasion then was that which the Father took, when he married his only Son to make ready the Gospel in this Great Marriage-Supper.

*Zech.9.9,
Mat. 21.5.

Joh. 2.2.

Isa. 64.5.

Gen. 21.8.

Thirdly, It is large in respect of the Quantity of Provision. It is not only much, but all; Many Dishes had been Great, but one of every sort is greater. Who can understand the loving-kindness of the Lord? Hast thou entred into the Springs of the Sea? or hast thou walked in the search of the Depth?

3.

Job 38.16.

V.37.

Depth? *Who can number the Clouds in wisdom*, when he poureth *Manna* forth? It is a Feast of Plenty, and *plenteous* is joyn'd with *Fat* in the Provisions of God's House, *Hab. 1. 16.* Wisdom hath laid in of all sorts enough, *Prov. 9. 2.* *She hath killed her Beasts, she hath mingled her Wine, she hath also furnished her Table.* As Feasts are usually the *best*, so when provided, they are made the *biggest* of Entertainments. *Fulness of Bread* is distributed in God's House, and *Flagons of Wine* are allow'd his Guests. *Canaan* hath large supplies from *Heaven*, and her Countrey

Acts 12. 20 is *nourished by the Kings Countrey.* As it is not in Handfulls of *Barley*, so neither

Prov. 28. 19. in *pieces of Bread*: He hath a *plenty of Bread* for her, and makes the *waters of a Full Cup* return hither. In the Dispensation of the Gospel, God goes not so

Psa. 73. 10. low, as to fetch out a *morsel of Bread*; that is enough for *Abraham*, but not for

Gen. 18. 5. the God of *Abraham*, who is his *Shield* and exceeding Great Reward. When God pre-

Job 36. 31. pareth our Food, he *giveth meat in Abundance*, spiritual Dainties as thick as Quails for *Israel* in the Wilderness, when he sent them meat to the Full. When God comes at any Time under the Gospel to make

Psa. 78. 25. Win-

Windows in Heaven, he will pour out such a Blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. God doth all Things in this Entertainment liberally; when he feeds us, then have we *Plenty of Victuals*; and when he gives us Drink to quench our Thirst, it is abundantly, as out of the Great Depths. He that giveth in spiritual Blessings * withholdeth no Good Thing. The Gospel, like the Ground of a certain Rich man hath been seen to bring forth plentifully; as the Fields of Egypt in the seven Plenteous years brought forth by Handfuls, so there is a Store-house in the Kingdom of Grace that supplyes the Table and his Furniture. There is a Fulness of Sufficiency for the many Thousands of Israel, when he makes the multitudes to sit down. The Feast will hold out, tho' the House of God be full of Guests from one end to another. Bread shall be given them, their waters shall be sure, tho' all his Elect were gathered from the four winds of Heaven.

2 Kings 17. 2.
Mal. 3. 10.
Psa. 44. 17.
Psa. 78. 15.
* Psa. 84. 11.
Luk. 12. 16.
Gen. 41. 47.
Num. 10. 35.
Math. 13. 35.
Isa. 16. 33.

The Third Branch of the Doctrine is, to evidence and premise *What things* we have need of against the Feast. For tho' the Provisions of the Gospel be first made ready,

III.

ready, yet, as to *our Benefit* or Participation, the Gospel must afford also some *Antecedent* Requisites, before we can experience it to be a Feast *good for Food*.

I.

Rom. 10.
17.

First, There must be an *Invitation* before-hand. And here by an Invitation, I would not be understood to intend *no more* than an *External* Call of the Sinner by God's Messengers under the *Word*; for tho' it is *necessary* too that there be such an *Outward* Call, because *Faith* comes by *Hearing*, yet this *alone* will be *insufficient* to partake of Gospel-Grace: I would therefore be meant to set forth the necessity of some *Powerful, internal* work of the *Spirit* upon the *Heart*, joyn'd with the *External* Call; that the *Privileges*, or highest *Benefits* and *Graces* of the Gospel may of *right* belong unto the *Called*. The Gospel is set forth in the *Parable* as a *Wedding* furnished with *Guests, both bad and good*, answerable to these *Two* Calls: The *external* Call doth nothing, but brings in men bad as it finds them, and thence come the *Bad Guests*, such as will say at last, *We have eaten and drunk in thy Presence, and thou hast taught in our streets*; to whom nevertheless the Master will reply, *I know you not whence*

Mat. 22. 10

Luk. 13. 26

the Great Supper of the Parable.

45

whence you are, depart from me all ye workers of Iniquity: whereas on the other hand, the *Inward* saving Call first *changeth* men into Good, and then brings them in, and thence come the *Good Guests*, whose company the King with his own Gracious Presence honours: If we obtrude our selves, and by an empty *vain Profession* without true Grace, *rush in* upon Gospel-Priviledges among true Guests, it will make *the Master of the Feast* angry, and say at last unto every such Bad Guest, *Friend, how camest thou in hither?* So to Luk. 13. 27 apply the *Graces* of the Gospel, or the *Comforts of the Holy Ghost* which he no ways applies himself, is, tho' in a secret and invifible manner, to become the *Robbers* of Churches, and *snatch* what God never *carv'd* to any such Guests. If men are not called out of their *wickedness*, God will say unto the *wicked*, *What hast thou to do to declare my Statutes, or that thou shouldest take my Covenant in thy mouth?* Psal. 50. 16. We dare not *meddle* with the Gospel, to apply its Priviledges and Comforts to our own use, till we are *bidden* to lay hold of them. We must be *invited* to the Great Feast, and receive a *Ticket* from our Father to partake
of Mat. 22. 12

of the Children's *Meat*. So long as men are yet in their *sins*, under a Profession of the Gospel, they *rob God*, as well as his *Children*, to feed their own *lusts*:

Hof. 2. 8. They take *his Corn and Wine and Oil which he hath multiplyed, and prepare them for Baal*, for some Lust they prefer, while

Psal. 16. 4. they *hasten after another God*. An Invitation therefore in some effectual work of Grace is a necessary *Antecedent*, or one of the Things which we have need of *against* the Feast.

2.

Secondly, There must be *Conduct*. We are by nature *strangers*, and need a *Guide* to bring us to our Father's House. *Lead me O Lord in thy Righteousness — make thy way strait before my Face*, Psal. 5. 8. If we are not *led*, we shall quickly *lose* our way. — *It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps*, Jer. 10. 23. If we are left to *trace* the way our selves, we shall *lose it thro' the Forrest*. It was not ascribed unto the *Israelites*, nor yet to *Moses*, nor unto *Joshua*, tho' a Captain of the Lord's Host, to come of *themselves* to feast in *Canaan*, but it is attributed to a *supreme Conduct*, *The Lord thy God bringeth thee into a good Land*, Deut. 8. 7. *A Land of Wheat and Barley, and Vines,*
and

the Great Supper of the Parable.

47

and Figtrees, and Pomegranates, a land of
Oyl-olive and Honey, a land wherein thou
shalt eat Bread without scarceness. They
could not have found the way thro' the
Wilderness, to meet with such a Table,
if He that prepared it had not by the
cloudy Pillar led them. It was not Their
Eyes, but the skilfulness of his own Hands.
And how should we grope as Blind men
in the Wilderness our selves, if we had
not the Benefit of that Promise, I will
lead them in Paths which they have not
known? Isa. 42. 10. The Shepherd of the
sheep leadeth them out, Joh. 10. 2, 3. And
he must carry his Lambs in his Bosom, to
feed them as a Lamb in such a Large
place.

V. 8.

V. 9.

Psa. 78. ult.

Isa. 40. 11.

Hof. 4. 16.

Thirdly, There must be Protection.
Conduct is not enough, if we have not a
Captain to fight our way thro': Plead my
Cause O Lord, with them that strive with
me, fight against them that fight against me,
Psa. 35. 1. If the Lord delivers not the
Soul of his Turtle Dove from the multi-
tude of the wicked, the Hawks will
intercept and seize it before it can fly as
the Doves to their windows. Deliver the
Poor and needy, rid them out of the Hand
of the wicked, Psa. 82. 4. * when those
that

3.

Psa. 74. 19.

Isa. 60. 8.

* Psa. 102.

that 8.

that are mad, are sworn against them, but must keep them, who hath called them and preserve them from this Generation for ever, Psa. 12. 7. Such as set their Face

Jer. 50. 5. toward Zion, do stand at last with thee

* Psa. 122. * Feet within Jerusalem, because thou Lord defendest them, Psa. 5. 11. He compasseth

2. them with favour, as with a * Shield, and

* Pf. 5. 12. therefore the Arrow cannot make them flee.

Job 41. 28 The Devil would gather up Instruments

enough to stop us in our way, if we

had not a Convoy to bring us safely on.

He would make a Prey of us, before

we could otherwise come nigh our own

Provision. We should be in jeopardy of

perishing, if while we did go by the

Nam. 20. 17. King's High-way, we had not his Protection.

4. Fourthly, There must be Appetite, for

Prov. 27. 7. to the Hungry every bitter thing is

latter part. sweet. God requires an opening of the

mouth, when he comes with a Hand of

Grace to fill it; Open thy mouth wide, and

I will fill it, Psa. 81. 10. We are not

* Dick for * straitned in God, but many a Blessing

somewhat changed. goes beside, because of our own narrow-

ness to receive it. A keen Appetite suits

with a Great Entertainment. The sharper

our Hunger, the sweeter God's Pro-

vision.

vision. A man of an *Evil Eye* may invite his Neighbours, and when they are come to his Banquet, may not look well upon them ; now the wise man tells us, that such a Man's *Delicacies* are not worth a Desire, *Prov. 23. 6. Eat thou not the Bread of him that hath an evil eye, neither desire thou his Dainty meats.* He steels his Victuals into *Knives* that may stab thee more than Hunger ; but we may bring our Appetite safe to swallow down morsels that we need not vomit up again. We cannot hunger and thirst too much upon the Road to Heaven, when God gives us *Provision for the way.* When the *Israelites* fell a lusting in the Wilderness, they digged their Graves with their Appetite, while God gave them their own Desires ; but Spiritual Desires can do us no harm, tho' we have such choice Longings in our Souls, that our Ardency is singular, and there is none upon the Earth that we desire besides, *Psa. 73. 25.* In a word, we shall disparage the full Table of the Gospel, if we bring not an empty Stomach thither.

Prov. 23. 7.

* V. 84

Gen. 45. 21.

Num. 11.

Psa. 78. 29

Lastly, The Entertainment of the Gospel requires a *Palate* to distinguish it.

5.

E

Doth

- Job 12. 11. *Doth not the ear try words, and the mouth taste his meat?* As it is true naturally,
- chap. 34. 3. so spiritually it is no *lie*, for the *Ear tryeth words, as the mouth tasteth meat*; the sanctified Ear tries Gods Words, as well as the *Natural Ear* the common things of Man. A man that hath the Spirit of God savoureth the things that be of God; he can distinguish between *Husks* that the
- Gen. 27. 9. Swine do eat, and *savoury meat* such as he loveth. His Taste can discern between a Fish and a Scorpion, he will tell you, the one *satisfies*, the other only *stings* him. David had a Holy Palate, and could relish an holy Entertainment, *Psa. 119. 103. Oh! how sweet are thy words unto my taste! yea sweeter than Honey to my month!* The Language of the New Testament speaketh of *Senses exercised*, Heb. 5. 14. or as the Original renders it, * *Senses made naked*, that the Object may not be intercepted, or the influence of the thing kept off; as suppose by a *Garment* upon the Flesh to obstruct *feeling*, or a *covering* hung before the Eyes to hinder *seeing*; so a *Palate* made naked, that hath no *perverse thing* as a *medium* to intervene between a Spiritual morsel, and its own sensing it. *Spiritu-*

* תִּדְּוֹנָה
תִּהְיֶה יָד
תִּמְנֶה אֶת
יָדָהּ

Job 6. 30.

al Senses are not like *natural*, to decay in Old Age; an *old Disciple* need not complain of God's Table, as *Barzillai* at *four score* did of the King's, *Can thy Servant taste what I eat, or what I drink?* he wanted a Palate at that Age to distinguish and savour the Dainty Morsels of a Prince, and therefore *David's* Table at Court would be fitted better by a young *Chimham*, than an *old Barzillai*: Now it is not so with the Servants of the Lord, as with that *old Servant* of *David*, but tho' they have been of a long standing, yet their *Taste* still remains, and their Palate can discern between Good and Evil. God's Children tho' you *blind-folded* them that their Eyes could not *behold their Teachers*, yet would tell you when their *heavenly Father feedeth them*. They can distinguish between that which is *unflavoury*, and *Food convenient*. A Spiritual, judicious Palate will discern, tho' it be of a *Benjamin's* *Mess*, whether it be *always with Grace seasoned with salt*. And this is the *Palate* which we have need of against the Feast. If we come to God's Provision without our *Taste*, we shall roll nothing under our Tongue, tho' we eat of the fat,

2 Sam. 19.
35.

v. 37, 38

Mat. 6. 26.

Job 6. 6.

Prov. 30. 8.

Gen. 43, 34

Col. 4. 6.

Neh. 8. 10. *and drink the sweet* ; but the most delicious Fare of the Gospel will afford us Morsels, of which we shall say without
 Eccl. 12. 1. *a sanctified, Gracious Palate, we have no pleasure in them.*

IV. The Fourth Thing is to bring in *the Bill of Fare*, and open the Provisions of this Gospel-store more distinctly.

It will appear that the Gospel is a *mighty* Table, enough to maintain the Guests beyond our *weak* Faith, seeing the
 Isa. 59. 1. *Lord's Hand is not shortned* that hath made all things ready. Moses indeed thought when the People were *six hundred thousand footmen*, that it was impossible to give them a sufficient *Meal* in that kind they askt, and still more impossible to feed them with such a *continued plenty*, that *they* might eat of it a *whole month* together, Num. 11. 21, 22. *Shall the Flocks and the Herds be slain for them, to suffice them? or shall all the Fish of the Sea be gathered together to suffice them?* which deserved that check from the Lord for his Unbelief in the verse following, v. 23. *Is the Lord's Hand waxed short?* Thou shalt see now whether my word shall come to pass to thee, or not. Now as the Lord rain'd down victuals in so
 great

great a measure to satisfy the Longing of that *mixed multitude* in the Wilderness, so he hath provided Plenty and Store enough in the Gospel for all the *hundred forty and four thousand which are redeemed from the Earth*. Indeed Solomon's Provision for one day amounted to a large Bill of Fare, 1 Kings 4. 22. 23.

Num. 11. 4

Rev. 14. 3.
latter part.

— *Thirty measures of fine Flower, and threescore measures of meal, ten fat Oxen, and twenty Oxen out of the Pastures, and an hundred Sheep, beside Harts and Roe-bucks, and fallow-deer, and fatted fowl*. But the Supper of our God is in a Richer and more abundant store than that, as will appear when *serv'd up* in this following Account, viz.

Milk for Babes, Meat for strong men, the true Bread from Heaven, Living water, Flesh to eat, Blood to drink, the Lamb of God, the fatted Calf for Prodigals, the Marrow of rich Forgiveness, the food of Knowledge, the nourishment of Faith, the feast of Holiness, (or the bunch of Hyssop in Sanctification of the Spirit) the hidden Manna of Election, the Royal Dainties of Assurance, the Evangelical honey-comb dropping Free Grace, the fatness of God's house in Ordinances, the Supplies of the Spirit of Jesus,

*the morsel of Hope for them that sail not
to sit with the King at meat, the full meal
of Contentment for them that have left all
and followed Christ, the Refreshments of the
Peace of Conscience, the Oyl of Joy, the
Cup of Consolation with the Wine of the
Kingdom running over, the continual Diet
of Perseverance in the sure mercies of Da-
vid, and the Fruit of the Tree of Life.*

I.

1. Milk for Babes, even the *אֶמְלֵךְ יָדָא*
the sincere Milk of the Word, which the
weakest of God's Little ones may lye at
the Breasts and suck. On this wise speak-
eth the Apostle Peter in his Exhortati-
on, 1 Pet. 2. 2. *As new-born Babes desire
the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may
grow thereby.* The Holy Scriptures are
made ready in the Plainest Truths for
a Hungry Infant that will not be quiet

Lam. 4. 4. till it finds the Breast out. The Tongue
of God's sucking Children would cleave
to the Roof of their mouth, if they could
not get to the Word, and there be, as

Cantic. 8. 1. one that hath sucked the Breasts of his

Heb. 5. 12. Mother. The first Principles of the Oracles
of God are compar'd to Milk, because
the first sort of Truths that young Con-
verts Learn, and are wont at the be-
ginning of the New-Birth to be most
affe-

affected with. The Apostle *Paul* speaking of the Infancy of his *Corinthian* Church, tells them in his Epistle which he first wrote unto them, *I have fed you with milk and not with meat, for hitherto* ^{1 Cor. 3.2.} *ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.* * *Fed you with Milk*] I ^{* 2^o 6^o 1^o 2^o 2^o} have given you a *Liquid Food* you might swallow easie ; *Others* have drank what I have given you to eat (as the Milk of Babes may by strong men be eaten or drunk either. *Not with meat, ye were not able to bear it :*] That is, ye could not digest the stronger and higher sort of Doctrines, *neither yet now are ye able.* ^{1 Cor. 14. 20.} *Children in understanding* must have the Food of their Souls, as their lack of *Age* requires it, and such a one as *Paul the* ^{Philem. v 9} *aged* knew it. Our Blessed Lord Jesus Christ had such weak Disciples with him, that he forbore a while feeding them with strong meat, and stays till more cubits were added to their Spiritual Stature, before he weans them from the milk of Babes, *Joh. 16. 12.* *I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.* He dealt with them proportionably to their present state and weaker Capacities in Christianity : So young Con-

Prov. 30. 8. verts must be fed with *Food convenient*, (not only convenient in the Quantity, and *Measure* as *Agur* meant it, but convenient in the Quality and *Nature* of it) and not too strong for them. Weaker Christians must be fed with weaker *Diet*, that their Souls may digest it, and be made the better for the Truths they take in.

Now the Gospel hath its *Milk* in Do-
 1 Cor. 14. 9.ctrines *easy to be understood*. Come ye
 therefore, says the Evangelical Prophet,
 Isa. 55. 1. and buy milk. It is a sort of
 Victuals treasur'd up in our Fathers
 House, that when ye receive the Kingdom
 of God, as a little Child, I mean, with a
 Mark 10. 15. very Childish and low Capacity, you
 may meet with Provisions therein suited
 Isa. 60. 16. to you. Our Babes in Christ may suck
 the Milk of the Gentiles, that is, those
 plain Revelations of the Son of God, who
 1 Tim. 3. 16. is now believed on in the World. They
 can milk out from these Breasts of conso-
 lation, till they are delighted with the
 Isa. 66. 11. Abundance of her Glory; Jerusalem (God's
 Church) the Mother of us all, hath Breasts
 Gal. 4. 26. given her which her Children shall ne-
 ver draw dry. The Holy Ghost stoops
 2 Tim. 3. 15. in very low Expressions, that from a
 Child

Child a Believer may know the Holy Scriptures. Its Doctrines are suited to the Understanding and Capacities of the meanest. The Gospel hath a Plenty that will furnish all sorts: The *Unskilfull in the Word of Righteousness* is not left destitute, but may receive the Word of his Grace, and use it's *Milk*, while he is a *Babe*. Tho' like *Zaccheus*, you are *Little of Stature*, yet you may reach of the *Fruit*, when you cannot climb the *Tree of Life* before you. The Gospel abounds with a *Treasure of Holy Learning* which some have received, tho' never brought up at the * *Feet of Gamaliel*, or the *School of one Tyrannus*. You may be taught the *Truth as it is in Jesus*, and know the Master of the School that sat among the *Doctours*, tho' you be not rankt among the *wise and prudent*. I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto *Babes*, Matth. 11. 25. The Word of God indeed hath its *Depths*, where there is no passing over, without *swimming* beyond your reach; but yet it hath its *shallows*, where going lower you may wade or foord thro'. Tho' it be the *Mystery of Godliness*, yet

Heb. 5.13.

Luk. 19.3.

*Act. 22.3.
Chap. 19.9.

Eph. 4.21.
Luk. 2:46.

1 Tim. 3.
16.

a Mystery so revealed, that the ordinary Readers or Hearers may be taught to profit by it. There be *plain* Truths written with the *Finger of God*, and *clear* Truths copied out, as with a *Sun-beam* from Heaven; God's Word is a *Text-Hand*, and he that *runs* may read it. In

Exod. 8.
19.

Isa. 7. 22.

a word, it hath the *Abundance of Milk* for *Babes*, to nourish even the *least* in our Father's House.

2.

2. *Meat for strong men*, or the strong Meat of the highest Gospel-Mysteries. Sublime and spiritual Doctrines may be set forth by *Meat*, as the Apostle doth in that forementioned place, 1 Cor. 3. 2. and *strong meat* as he calls them, Heb. 5. 14. which *belongeth to them that are of Full Age*, (that is, above New Converts; the Adult,) *who by reason of use have their senses exercised, to discern both Good and Evil: by reason of use,*] or, as the word is * rendred, thro' a *Habit*. Altho' young *Children's* Stomachs will not endure strong meat, yet the Stomachs of grown *men* are *habituated* to receive Diet according to their *Age*; their *Constitution* is stronger than *Children's*, and therefore their *Meat* above them.

* *ἡ ἀσκήσις*
ἐξ ἡ.

† Isa. 28.
9.

Not, that any who are † *weaned from the Milk*

Milk are *above* the Word, but they are by it grown *taller* in Knowledge than just to reach unto *first Principles*, and are not still little Children learning their *Rudiments* in the School of Christ. While others are * *drawn from the Breasts*, (that * 2 Tim. 3. 7. is, are yet as the Infant whom the Mother hath but newly taken off her Breasts,) *these* are gone higher in spiritual Gifts and Attainments, than when they were *first* coming to the * Knowledge of the Truth. They have taken a Good Degree under the Teachings of Gods Spirit. The Gospel yields these Provisions of Strong meat for *them*. * 1 Tim. 3. 13.

There are indeed Doctrines in the Word of Righteousness, that contain the Great Mystery. To instance briefly in Heb. 5. 13!

some, as, (1) * That Profound Mystery in the *Trinity* of Persons, the *Father*, *Son*, and *Spirit*, that *these Three are one*, one God, and yet Three Persons for ever. This is a High Mystery: "For (as † *one* says,) "tho' the *Unity* of a God-head is Demonstrable and "clear to the Eye of Reason, yet the

* Tho' Faith cannot comprehend the Matter believed, yet it knoweth the Ground why it doth believe, namely, the Testimony of Gods Word which saith it is thus and thus. *Antho. Burgess, Exposition of the 3d. Chapt. of the 1 Epist. to the Cor. pag. 71.*

† Culverwell, *Light of Nature*, pag. 148.

"Trinity

"Trinity of Persons, that is, three Glorious

"Relations in one God, is certain to none

"but an Eye of *Faith*. Indeed (as another

*Dr. Bates,
Christian
Religion
proved by
Reason,
p. 187.

* excellent *Author* well observes,) "The

"Unity and supreme Equality of the

"Three Persons in the Godhead, tran-

"scends our Conception, but Reason

"cannot prove it to be impossible. The

Doctrine of these Three Glorious Sub-

sistences in one single, uncompounded,

indivisible, Divine Essence, is a Truth,

Phil. 4. 7. but *passeth all Understanding*. (2) The

Doctrine of *Reconciliation* in making Sa-

tisfaction to Divine Justice for Man's

Breach of the Law, by the Death of the

Eph. 2. 15. Second Person in the Trinity, *so making*

Peace, is so much above our shallow

Reason to comprehend, that * some (ra-

ther Professors of *Reason* than *Faith* or

Divinity) dare strike at the *Foundation*,

to see whether they can remove our *Cor-*

ner-stone. (3) The Mysterious Hypo-

statistical Union of the Two *Natures* in the

Glorious *Person* of the Mediatour (or

Θεοῦ υἱοῦ καὶ ἀνθρώπου,) with other Doctrines con-

2 Pet. 1. 19.

tained in the *sure Word of Prophecie*, are

Truths above the Understanding of the

Highest Christian, or the Greatest Schol-

lar in the World, tho' not to *apprehend*,

yet

et to comprehend them. Understandings
 (we may say) that are got to the Fullest
measure of the stature of Christ, are yet Eph. 4. 13.
 out of their Reach, when they are walk-
ing in the search of the Depth, and try to Job 38. 16.
 athom these *Deep Things of God*. Alas!
 these are *Mysteries in Christ* which they
 that are * *compleat in Christ* must sit * Col. 2. 10
 down at the Well-Head of Life, and cry
 out with the Apostle, * *O the Depth of* * 3^d Ed-
the Riches both of the Wisdom and Know- 30.
ledge of God, how unsearchable are his Judg-
ments, and his ways past finding out! Rom.
 11. 33. Nay, as * one says, "These are * Mr. Sam.
 "Things which the Glorious *Angels* strain Lee, Joy
 "at, and makes their *Wisdoms* bend like of Faith,
 "an Ozier in a Storm (to look down in p. 214.
 "to them) and can never feel the Bot-
 "tom of these *Deeps* without Drown-
 "ing.

But however, there are Doctrines also
 in the Gospel which may very properly
 be likened to the *Strong Meat* and Food
 of grown Christians. These also are
 found among the *Mysteries of Knowledge*
 given us from the Spirit of Revelations;
 as concerning the *Decrees*, both touching Rom. 11. 7.
the Election in Christ, and the οὐ λóγις,
the rest that were Blinded; and concern- Ibid.
 ing

ing Christ's *Natures*, that there are *Two* (setting the mysterious consideration of the *Modus* in their Personal Union aside); concerning his *Offices*, Prophetical, Sacerdotal and Regal; his *Two States*, of Humiliation and Exaltation; his Accomplishment of all the *Types* in the Old Testament, Personal and Mystical, those * *Swadling-cloaths* in which Christ was exhibited to the Fathers; All the *Glorious Prophecies* of his Gospel-Church state and *Mediatory Kingdom* to be yet seen in the *Kingdoms of this World*; The *Doctrines* of the *Resurrection*, the *Last Judgment*, and an everlasting *Future state*, are the *strong meat* at this Plenteous Entertainment for Christians that have arrived to some *Maturity* in Knowledge, and with a competent measure of understanding are able to *digest* what they feed upon.

* Dr. Tho. Taylor of the *Types*, p. 2.

Rev. II. 15.

3.
Ruth. I. 6.

Ezek. 3. 16.

3. *The true Bread from Heaven.* The Lord hath visited his People in giving them *Bread*, as well as *Strong meat*. Bread is the *Staff of Life*, take away Bread, and a *Morsel* of strong Meat may be enough to *overcome* us; so take away Christ, and when we had to do with some of the *Doctrines* in the Word of Truth

Truth without him, they would be too strong for us, and make us spit them out again : For Example, if we were left to consider the Infinite, naked Essence of God, his Divine Immensity would swallow us ; or if we were to consider the Infinite Holiness of God, that is of purer Eyes than to behold evil, and that cannot without an unspeakable Abhorrency, look on Iniquity ; if we were to ponder his strict and inexorable Justice, abstracting the consideration from the Person of the Mediatour, such a morsel of strong Meat would be so much beyond our Natures to endure, that we could not take the Name of God into our Mouths. We are such rotten Stubble since our Fall, that if we have not always to do with a God in Christ, the Flame will burn up the wicked, for our God is a consuming Fire. We must never touch any strong meat, if we have not the Bread of God at hand. And we must not approach unto God immediately, but come thro' Christ to God, that he may behold us in the Son of his Love only. When we are famished, and cry unto God for Bread, as the Land of Egypt in the Dearth cryed unto Pharaoh, he sends us for supplies to Christ ;

Hab. 1.13.

Psal. 106.
18.
Heb. 12.29

Christ; says Pharaoh, Go unto Joseph, whom he saith unto you, do, Gen. 41. 55. and saith God, *This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased, hear ye him*, Math.

Gen. 47. 12. 17. 5. This Joseph was sent into Egypt to nourish all his Father's household with

Chap. 45. 7. Bread, and save their Lives by a Greater Deliverance, than that other Joseph, when he saved the Lives of his Father's Household in the Type. *What is man*, that he

Psa. 8. 4: should eat the Bread of his God! that he should have Christ at the meal, to eat with every morsel! And yet thro' the Riches of Grace we have the True Bread to eat with Strong meat from Heaven! Christ is our Bread at the Feast, or we could not live upon fat and Plenteous meat without him.

This is evident, and grounded upon those words, Joh. 6. 32. *My Father giveth you the true Bread from Heaven*, which is called the Bread of God, and more Joh. 6. 33. fully in the next Verse explained, *For the Bread of God is He that cometh down from Heaven*, — the Bread from Heaven καὶ ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, by way of eminence; otherwise the Mannah of the Israelites in the Wilderness, is called Bread from Heaven too, as Neh. 9. 15. *And gavest them Bread*

Bread from Heaven for their Hunger; so Psa.
105. 40. — and satisfied them with the
Bread of Heaven. But yet considering how
infinitely short that *Mannah* was of the
Blessings of Gospel-Grace, Christ makes a
Distinction between the Bread of *Moses*,
and the Bread of God, tho' Both came
down from Heaven. He grants it to be
That which came down from Heaven, but * *ὁ κατὰ*
it was not * *He* that came down from *βασιλεως*.
Heaven. As if he had said, It was not Jesus
Christ the Son of the Father, tho' it was
Bread *real*, yet it was not Bread *personal*;
Moses gave you not *Him*, or *That* Bread
from Heaven, *Job*. 6. 32. middle part.
To sum up all, It is as if he had told them,
The Bread which God nourished your Fa-
thers with miraculously, under the Dis-
pensation of *Moses*, was *not* the intended,
spiritual, Gospel-Bread, which God would
send under a *new* Dispensation, but I am
the Bread which my Father gives at Sup-
per. The *Israelites* had *Mannah*, but now
my Father offers *Me*. Thus, our Blessed
Lord Jesus Christ is such Bread as is the
Staff of Life to Faith.

Now in the Storehouse of the Gospel
we are furnished with this Transcen-
dent, Mysteious Bread. Oh! who ever
beheld

- beheld among Men or Angels *such another*
 Glorious Loaf as this! *he* was stamp't in the
 Mill, and ground to Powder, and then
moulded into Bread for us, when it pleas'd
 the Father to bruise him! Lo! now
 there is Bread enough in our Father's
 House to go the whole Table round.
- Ps. 104. 15. This is the *Bread that strengtheneth Man's*
 Heart; it hath a Faculty to preserve our
 Strength, and when our Strength is spent,
 a power to renew our Vigour: *Thou*
 Manth. 4. 4. *man lives not by other Bread*, yet he lives
 by *this* Bread alone. It is *Unleavened*
 Bread, who did *no sin, neither was Guile*
 1 Pct. 2. 22 *found in his mouth*. It is Bread to be
 eaten; He that so loved the *World* as to
 give his Son, hath cast his *Bread upon*
the waters among much People, to *mini-*
ster Bread for our Food. They that sold
 him indeed for *Thirty pence* did not think
 him to be *Two hundred penny-worth* of
 Bread to satisfy a multitude here in the
 Wilderness; but we that have *tasted that*
 Ps. 34. 8. *the Lord is good*, must cry like the Daugh-
 ters of the Horeb, *Give, give, Lord*
 Pro. 30. 15. *evermore give us this Bread!* And surely,
 Joh. 6. 34. as we should at all Times be affected,
 so more especially herewith when he is
 Acts 2. 42. known of us in *Breaking of Bread* and in
 Prayers.

4. *The Living water.* Bread and Water, Meat and Drink are coupled, they virtually comprehend all, and contain the several Particulars of a perfect and compleat Entertainment. The Provision that may be *eaten* is commonly under one General Term reduced to *Bread*, and the Portion to be *drank*, of whatsoever kind, may also alike be comprehended under the Name of *Water*. So that here is the Stay and the Staff, the whole Staff of Bread, and the whole stay of Water, *Isa. 3. 1.* only it must be remembered in a Conformity to the Scope of the Parable (on which this Spiritual Feast is grounded) that Bread Water, &c. are no more than Metaphorical and borrowed Terms, to express in a Figure Christ and the Benefits of the Gospel, representing them to our Faith under distinct and various Notions. Well, at the Supper of the Parable there is the Gift of this Living water: See *Joh. 4. 10.* *If thou knewest the Gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee Living Water.* The Woman of *Samaria* questioned from whence it came, and did not believe it

could be had in the manner Christ reported, *Joh. 4. 11. From whence hast thou that Living water?* She apprehended no other than that *Well of Sychar* on the Place, her Eyes were yet opened to see no more than a *common* Well of water, she found out *Jacob's*, but saw not the *Well of Jesus*; and therefore cries out, *From whence hast thou that Living water?* But Christ directs her to seek it in the Benefits and offer of *himself*, who could furnish her with such a Water, as would never waste in using, but spring up into a Well of it in Him or in Her that drank it, *Joh. 4. 13, 14. Whosoever drinketh of this Water* (that is, of this Well at *Sychar*, or any other Earthly water like it) *shall thirst again*; * (tho' it may somewhat allay and slake the thirst at present, yet it never advanceth the Partaker into the Fruition of any perfect Good) *but whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst, but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting Life. Springing up.*] The Benefits of Christ which are set forth by Living water in this Gospel-Feast are like the *Loaves in the Miracle that multiply in the*

* *Quo plus
sint pota,
plus sitim-
tur aque.*

*Thirsts no
more after
any other
Thing, nei-
ther thro'
necessity or
variety.
Shaw's
Immanuel,
p. 211, 212.

the Distribution ; for the more we drink of this Living water, the more we shall see still *Flowing by*. Christ is the Fountain of Life, and tho we drink abundantly, we shall never exhaust the *ten Thousandth* part of this Living Fountain-head. This is the true *Rehoboth*, the spacious well that hath Room enough for every one that is athirst, to come and drink round it. This water of the well of *Betlehem* comes without *Contention*, and we need not call the Well *Ezek* : For as Christ now is *Bread* that we need not get with the *Peril of our Lives*, so he is *Water*, that, to fetch, we are not bid like the *three mighty* in *David's Guard*, to break first thro an *Host* that encamps against us. This is a *Well* where we may leave our *water-pot*, since when we have drank of the *Water*, we carry a well away with us. It is the *Lamb's Fountain*, and thou mayst wring more out of this *Fleece*, than *Gideon's (a) Bowl* full, or *Hagar's (b) bottle*, or *Elijah's four (c) barrells of water*. This is none of the *bitter water* that causeth the *(d) curse*, but a *Blessing*, when it comes into the *(e) Bowels like water*. Our other *Drink* is *(f) sour*, but this is a *Fountain that yieldeth sweet water (g)*.

Mark 8.19
20.

Song 5. 1.

Gen 26.22

Rev. 22.17

2 Sam. 23
15.

Gen. 26.
20.

Lam. 5. 9.

2 Sam. 23.
16.

Psa. 27. 3.

Joh. 4. 28.

v. 14.

^a Judg. 6.38

^b Gen. 21.15

^c 1 Kings

18. 33.

^d Num. 5.

22.

^e Pl. 109.18

^f Hof. 4. 18.

^g Jam. 3.11

This Precious Liquor, this incomparable and true *Aqua vita*, was set abroad upon the Tree of the Cross, when *one of the Souldiers with a Spear pierc'd his side,* (b) Joh. 19. 34. *and there forthwith came out Blood and (h) water.* And lo! he continues still as a pure River of the water of life, running plentifully down the Gospel by his Guests at the Table-side. In a word, he is

Rev. 22. 1. water to *cleanse* our Filth, and water to *quench* our Thirst besides.

5. *Flesh to eat.* When the mixed multitude in the Wilderness fell a lusting, it was to eat Flesh, Num. 11. 4. in so much that the Children of Israel *wept again, and said, who shall give us Flesh to eat? and can he provide Flesh for his People?* Psa. 78. 20. last words. But lo! he that commanded the Clouds *rained down Flesh upon them as Dust,* and *feathered Fowls like as the sand of the Sea,* v. 27. Who indeed would have looked for such a *Shower?* for when they tempted God in the Desert, one might rather have feared he should have turned them to *grass* with their Flocks and Herds, than have rained *Flesh* out of the Clouds upon them. Yet tho' they had provoked God in the day of Temptation in the wilderness, he

tells

the Great Supper of the Parable.

71

tells them *on the morrow ye shall eat Flesh*,
 Num. 11. 18. But alas ! what was their
 Flesh, tho' the Flesh of *Quails*, to the
 Flesh of *Jesus Christ*? What was the
 Flesh he gave unto all this People, in
 comparison of the Flesh of the Son of
 God, which he gives the Soul to feed
 upon by Faith ? Jesus Christ yields a
 variety to the Faith of God's Elect ; and
 it doth not follow, that *their* Soul, like Num. 21. 5.
 those *Israelites*, doth loath him as *light*
Bread, because their Soul also longeth
 for his *Flesh* to eat. But we may here law-
 fully put in that wish in *Job*, *Oh ! that* Job 31. 31.
we had of his Flesh ! God doth not call
 you to eat the Flesh of *your* Sons, but Jer. 19. 9.
 the Flesh of *His* ; nor the Flesh of your
Friend, but the Flesh of *the man that is*
his Fellow. What *strange Flesh* was that Zech. 13. 7
 which the Poor Woman in *Samaria* had,
 when she *boiled her own Son* for meat ! 2 Kings 6.
 She parted with the *Fruit of her Womb*, 29.
 being *stricken thro' for want of the Fruits*
of the Field ! But 'tis a more astonishing Lam. 4. 9.
 wonder, that God parted with the *San*
of his Bosom, that we might eat the Flesh
 of this Sacrifice ! And there is no fear of
 making our Brother to offend by eating this
 Flesh while the World standeth. 1 Cor. 8. 13

F 4

This

This mysterious Delicate the Flesh of Christ, contains the Benefits of the Gospel which make up this Royal Entertainment, that he purchas'd by his Death and Sufferings in the Flesh, when he
 1 Pet. 3. 18 *was put to Death in the Flesh, but quickened by the Spirit.* This Doctrine of the Flesh of Christ given for meat unto our Faith, is a further Exposition of the *True Bread*, Joh. 6. 51. *And the Bread that I will give is my Flesh* — Now God must
 1 Tim. 3. 16. *be first manifest in the Flesh, and in the likeness of sinful Flesh,* and in this Flesh of ours die, to prepare meat for us ; for
 Rom. 8. 3. *as the Creatures that have Life die, that we, a while in our Bodies, by their Death might live,* so it is the very Flesh of Christ and *him crucified* that must give Life unto our Souls. His Flesh suffer'd, his Flesh was pierc'd, he was hung upon that *Flesh hook* of the Cross, when God gave him to be *meat* unto us : His Flesh was *powdered* in the very Grave where other Things *corrupt*, but his *Flesh*
 Acts 2. 31. *did not see Corruption,* to be made ready as a sweet and Dainty Morsel for us. The wrath of God broke forth upon the
 Heb. 10. 5. *Body he had prepared, and kindled a Fire in his Anger that even boil'd him as*
Flesh

the Great Supper of the Parable.

73

Flesh within the Caldron, and roasted him Mic. 3. 31
 that his *Flesh* might be *meat* indeed for
 us, *Joh. 6. 55.* his *Flesh* was *bor'd thro'*
 and *thro'*, tho' *not a Bone* of him *should*
be broken. Thus was he *bruised* for our
Iniquities, *Isa. 53. 5.* or *there should no*
Flesh be *saved.* Hence he hath spoken, *March. 24.*
 (*Joh. 6. 57.* last words,) *He that eateth* 22.
me, even he shall live by me. This may
 serve to answer either the Jew's, or the
 unbelieving Gentile's Question, *How can* Joh. 6. 52.
this Man give us his Flesh to eat? it be-
 ing not to be understood of a *Sacramental*
 eating, as the *Rhemists* gloss it, but a *spi-*
ritual by Faith alone. Oh! how may we
 stand amaz'd at the Provisions in Him
 whose Name is *VVonderful!* This is the *Isa. 9. 6.*
 Fifth Dish, the *Flesh of Jesus Christ.*

6. *Blood to drink.* Perhaps our Igno-
 rant *squeazy* old man may loath it, as
 the *Egyptians* did to drink of the water of
 the River, after it was smitten with the
 Rod of *Moses*, and turned into Blood;
 but our New-man redeemed by Blood
 will take great Delight in it. Alas! we
 have sinn'd our selves into such a *Fea-*
vour, that our own common Drink in-
 flames; we have kindled a *Burning*, which
 nothing but Blood, the Blood of *Christ*
 will

will quench : if man tryes to put the
 Tit. 3. 5. *Fire* out by any **works** of Righteous-
ness which he hath done, the sweat of his
 Brows will drop in, and like Oil still
increase the Flame. Nay, it is not *VVa-*
ter barely, separate from Blood, will
 quench our Anguish, tho' we *trusted*
 Job 40. 23. *that we could*, with the Behemoth, draw
up Jordan into our mouths, we must still
 have Blood to drink. Oh! it requires
 great Faith in the Son of God to see it,
 for otherwise Corruption will make us
too nice to be entertain'd with Blood.
 Faith, and Faith alone is kept alive by it;
 it cannot, it needs not live upon a more
 Generous and Sprightly Liquor than this
 pure **Blood** of the Grape ; it makes eve-
 ry Morsel of the Banquet Savoury, that
 'tis sprinkled with the Blood of Jesus Christ!
 Deut. 32. 14. last words. 1 Pet. 1. 2. part. Flesh as before, and Blood now, do in-
 clude the whole Body, τὸ σῶμα καὶ τὰ σπέρματα,
 an intire Christ, every Thing in him;
 it is not only Except ye eat the **Flesh** of
 the Son of Man, but καὶ τὸ αἷμα αὐτοῦ τὸ αἷμα,
 Except ye drink his **Blood** too, ye have
 no Life in you, Joh. 6. 53. It is not
 meant of a corporal Drinking him Sacra-
 mentally, as the Papists say, that he speaks
 of in this Chapter, (as under the former
 parti-

particular it was hinted to be neither spoken of a Sacramental Eating of his Flesh) for then except ye partook every one of the *Lords Supper*, ye could not be saved; whereas it might so happen, that no space is given (at least to all) after Conversion to partake of any other Lords Supper, than the *Marriage-Supper of the Lamb* in Heaven. Besides, it is principally to be considered, that the Lord's Supper was not instituted till *afterwards*, and therefore could not be here intended. Indeed it is most evidently a Truth, that we have Blood both ways to drink; that is, we have it *spiritually* to receive by Faith, when the Soul ventures out to fetch in all that it needs from the Efficacy and vertue of this Blood; and we have it also *Sacramentally*, as represented under the Element of Wine, while Love that bled, *drops* the earnest into our Hearts, and *seals* it up in us, (this Consideration will fall in more properly under the Cup of Consolation). We are now to consider the Blood of Christ as it notes the special *Application* of it to the Soul for the Being and Support of a New Creature. And thus, it is rendred infinitely *richer* to the believing Soul.

nous Liquor to make it fat and flourishing.

Drinking of the Blood of Christ implies an Act of Faith in the Soul which receives all into it that was wrought by the Blood of Christ without it, or takes hold of the Vertue of this Blood, and applyes it to the proper Use and End which God himself hath given it. To make it more plain; it is Blood to (a) *cleanse*, Faith steps out to this Blood, and brings in a cleansing vertue from it; it is Blood to (b) *soften*, Faith makes out to it, and receives in the softning Influence of this Blood, till the *Stone* dissolves, and (c) *mountains are melted with it*: it is Blood to * *atone*, Faith runs for the *Blood of Atonement* hither: It is Blood to (d) *redeem*, Faith takes in the Redemption by it, and knows that the † *Redeemer lives*. It is Blood to *justifie*, (Rom. 5. 9.) Faith rests here for *absolution* from Guilt, and real *Imputation* of a Perfect *Righteousness* without, to appear at the Bar of God in: It is Blood to *confirm*, Zech. 9. 11. Faith believes it shall be even as God hath spoken, and under its *cloud* looks upon the *Blood of the Covenant*, and sees
In a word, it is Blood to
save,

(a) 1 Joh.
1. 7.

Rev. 1. 5.

Rev. 7. 14.

(b) Isa. 34.
3.

(c) Ezek.
36. 26.

* Col. 1. 20.

(d) Acts
20. 28.

Eph. 1: 7.

Col. 1: 14.

Rev. 5. 9.

† Job 19.
25.

ve, (Rom. 5. 9, 10.) and Faith makes
 readily out to it, to lay hold upon Eternal 1 Tim. 6.
 life. It is every way, as the Scripture 12.
 speaketh abundantly of this Precious Blood, 1 Pet. 1. 19
 that Faith drinks it in. The manifold
 benefits of this Blood of Christ do make
 a Generous Drink to Faith, that as his
 flesh is Meat, so his Blood is Drink indeed,
 John. 6. 55.

Blood under the Law was forbidden, Gen. 9. 4.
 but lo! here is *Flesh with the Life*, (that Lev. 17.
 with the Blood) thereof allow'd us, 10, 11.
 Faith must receive it in the *Antitype*, tho'
 sense was to refrain it under the *Type* :
 we must in all our Food have a recourse
 to the *Mediatour*, and when we eat of
 his Banquet, drink his Blood also. We
 must never eat of our morsel alone with- Job 31. 17.
 out the * *Blood of Sprinkling*. Indeed it * Heb. 12.
 could not have been a Banquet without 24. P^t.
 Blood. Our Feast had been otherwise
 spoil'd, and all our fair Hopes spilled.
 Oh! Blessed, yea, for ever Blessed be
 the Master of our Feast for this One Thing
 among the All Things ready, even the
 Propitiation which we have thro' Faith
 in his Blood, Rom. 3. 25. A Propitia-

† ἱλαστικὸν
alludes
both to
the Sacrifices, and the Place of the Sprinkling the Blood. Char.
 Vol. 2d. p. 896.

tion,]

tion,] *ἱλασμενον*, the Grateful Offering
 to God, that every way pleas'd him
 It was thro' the *Scent* of Blood, this
 perfumed Blood of Christ in the No-
 strils of *Jehovah*, that God was well ple-
 sed. *In whom we have Redemption thro*
his Blood, according to the Riches of his
Grace, Eph. 1. 7. * Satisfaction to Justice
 was compleated, when he had filled the
Ephah with his Blood for the *measure* of
 our sins. Christ came not by Water
 only, tho' a Fountain to wash in, or a
 Well to drink of, but he came by Water
 and Blood, 1 Joh. 5. 6. swimming thro
 two Seas at once. Water may signify
 his coming to *sanctifie* Us, and Blood to
satisfie God for us: Our *Holiness* springs
 from one, as he is *made of* God to us
sanctification, and our *Happiness* flows
 from the other, as he is *made* both our
Righteousness and Redemption.

* In effu-
 sione San-
 guinis fuit
 complemen-
 tum Satis-
 factionis.

Davenant
 in Ep. ad
 Col. cb. 1.
 14. p. 91.

1 Cor. 1.
 30.

* Charnock,
 2d. Vol.
 p. 1186.

2 Pet. 2. 1.

The maintaining of Justification (as
 a * Great man observes) by this Blood
 seems to be the Great contest between
 the True Church and the Antichristian
 State. It hath many Enemies, especially
 those two Bands of Warriours, the Pa-
 pists and Socinians, that carry away the
 Beauty of the Cross by *denying* the Lord

tha

that bought them: It seems to be the more deformed in the *Latter*, because they have renounced many Romish Abominations, but will still retain the *Great-est*. And yet the *Socinians*, to take off the Efficacy of Christs Blood on the Cross, positively assert that he now maketh the *Expiation*, where he maketh the *Intercession*. Christ makes our Peace (say they) now in Heaven by the * *Ab-olute Power* he hath with the Father there; which if true, must shut him wholly out of Heaven as a *Mediatour of the Covenant*, to admit him in as the *Second Person* only in the Godhead. But our High-Priest hath not entred into the Holy of Holies *without Blood*, which he once offered for the *Errours of the People*, nor yet as the High-Priests of Old, with the *Blood of Goats and Calves*, but by his own Blood, he entred in once into the Holy Place, † *having obtained Eternal Redemption for us*, Heb. 9. 12. so that our Redemption is by his Blood, and was accomplished *antecedently* to his ascending into Heaven, and sitting at the Right Hand of God. It is the Merit of his Blood he carried up with him, and which he still, in his *Intercession*

* *Virtute & Potestate plenâ & absolutâ quam à Patre consecutus est.*
Cateches. Racov. (mibi) 160.
An. 1651.

Heb. 9.7.

† *investitus, when he had found out, or obtained a Redemption for us, it must not be construed in the present Tense.*

as

as a Priest, pleads there. So that the *Notion* of Christs reconciling us to God [by an absolute Power in Heaven,] without any reference to his Blood, shed on Earth, is a *Socinian Dream*; which, with every one that is awake, and stands up from the Dead, will vanish. The Gospel had been a *Dry Feast*, whatever *Socinians* think of it, if He that made it, had not given us Blood to drink. In a

Phil. 3. 18. word, they are *Enemies to the Cross of Christ*, who will not know him Crucified.

Jude 3. And we must contend earnestly for the Faith, and for the Faith in his Blood,

* *Ut prius.* since a whole * *School of Prophets* would

Luk. 22. 20 rob us of the Cup of the New Testament in Christs Blood (considered meritoriously,) as well as a *Colledge of Jesuites* deprive us of the same Sacramentally by denying the Cup in the Lords Supper.

7. The Lamb of God. Christ is still represented in the Scripture by a copious variety at his Supper of the Parable.

As we have the Blood of Christ provided, so it is of the Lamb * *immaculate*, 1 Pet. 1. 19. a Lamb without Blemish, and without Spot. The word signifies one so perfectly every way accomplish'd, that a

* ἀμὼς ἀ-
μώμους καὶ
ἀσπίλους

carping

carping *Momus* which finds fault with every thing, or the very *Herodians* that lye in wait to catch him, shall yet find out no Righteous Charge against him, this *Dish* at our Feast was Typically represented by the *Paschal Lamb*: For so we read in the Institution of the Jewish Passover, *Exod. 12. 8.* That *all the Congregation of Israel were to take every man a Lamb, according to the house of their Fathers, a Lamb for a house.* Exod. 12. 5 This male of the first year taken out from the Sheep, or from the Goats, was a very apt representation of the *Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the World*, as we read in the Salutation of *John*, when he seeth Jesus, *Joh. 1. 29.* In the Passover the Lamb was entire and undivided, in the Gospel it is a *whole* Christ prepared, his entire Humane Nature united to the Godhead, his whole Body and his whole Blood set forth *collectively* under one, as before we had him all *distributively* under two, that is, Bread and Water, Flesh and Blood apart. We may behold him here in the Lamb, as an *entire mess* that is served all in at *once*. We read it particularly express'd, that when *Samuel* entertained *Saul* and his Servant, there

G

was

was a single joynt provided, 1 Sam. 9. 24. (and indeed *one* was enough for Saul who had *no* portion with David,) The Cook took up the shoulder, and that which was upon it, and set it before Saul: but God required the Jews to make ready their Lamb, as it consisted of every joynt whole, not so much as the Legs or Appurtenances thereof excepted, Exod. 12. 8. to signifie a Redeemer that was not to be parted, but to be given *all* away. This is the Lamb slain from the Foundation of the World, Rev, 13. 8. latter part, that is, he was *determinately* slain in the Counsel and Fore-knowledge of God, being infallibly ordained to it, and therefore lookt upon by God that hath yesterday, to day and for ever always present before him, as if it had been done from thence actually; and he was slain *virtually*, for Adam had the benefit thereof from the beginning, when God promised the seed, before he drove out the man, as much as if the Act had passed. Well, the Table of the Gospel hath this most Glorious Provision on it of the Lamb slain, and slain *actually* for the Entertainment in *these last Days*. Lo! God hath pitied the Lost Sinner, like that poor way-faring

faring man, and hath not spared to dress
of the Lamb that lay in his own Bosom for
 him. This Lamb of the first year, this
 Firstling of the Flock is brought *as a*
Lamb to the Slaughter to be serv'd up in
 meat for *them* to whom it is *the Fathers*
good pleasure to give the Kingdom. This
 Lamb was a richer present from the King
 of Heaven, tho' One, than that which
 the King of Moab rendred unto the King
 of Israel in one hundred Thousand Lambs,
 and as many Rams with the Woolle. It is true
 of Believers on Earth, as well as spoken of
 such in Heaven, *the Lamb shall feed them.*

2 Sam. 12.

3.

Isa. 53. 7.

Luk. 12. 32

2 King 3. 4

Rev. 7. 17.

8. *The Fatted Calf for Prodigals.* The
 Gospel and the Blessings of it by Christ
 in the sumptuous Provisions made ready
 are set forth in a Parable by Christ, un-
 der the very same Resemblance. We
 need not be any ways *asham'd of Christ*
or his words, in this adulterous and sinful
Generation, nor think it low Divinity to
preach, or speak as Christ teacheth us.
 He tells us, *Luke 15. 13.* of a younger
 Son that gathered all together, and took
 his Journey into a far Countrey, and
 there *wasted his Substance with Ricious liv-*
ing, and that he had ** spent all,* tho' he
 went off at first with never so great a

Mark 8. 38

* V. 14.

Stock, and he *began to be in want* ; but yet afterwards, when he * *arose and came to his Father, his Father, when he was yet a great way off, saw him, hath compassion on him, embraceth him, bringeth him into his House, and presently ordereth a sumptuous, costly Entertainment to treat him at coming home.* * *Bring hither the Fatted Calf, and kill it, and let us eat and be merry.* This is the Parable, this is the *Letter*, but let us see how the Spirit giveth more life.

2 Cor. 3. 6.
last words.

The Great God in the dispensation of the Gospel deals after the same way with Sinners. We Foolish Gentiles were once like this younger Son, happy and wanting nothing in our Father's House, God *made man upright*, Jews and Gentiles were both in *Adam* perfect : But we quickly grew Prodigal, and *run into a great excess of riot* ; [we sought out many Inventions.] But nevertheless under a new Covenant God hath granted Repentance unto Life, in the bringing of many Sons and Daughters unto Glory, and he hath brought forth an Entertainment upon his receiving of poor Gentiles home.

Luk. 1. 78.

These tender mercies of our God were displeasing to the Elder Son, and grievous

in

in the sight of the Jews. These had, tho' the Parable doth not expressly note it, been taken *first*, (after the Revolt in *Adam*) into their Father's House; they had been brought into a Church-state a great while before, and treated so well with the *Fatness of the Olive*, they had forgot the *Poverty* and Distress of the younger Brother, and grew angry to see how these Gentiles are treated with the *Riches of the Gospel*; whereas he had never bestowed more than the *Beggarly Elements of the Law* on *them*, not so much as a *Kid*, nothing like this *fatted Calf* to rejoyce or be merry with. But lo! how ever it pleaseth the *Father*, tho' it angers his Eldest Son. He puts on Bowels, and is a *Father of mercies* to a wandring, disobedient Son; he spares him, tho' he were not a Son that serv'd him. He doth not leave poor hungry, and Thirsty Travelers to wander in the wilderness where there is no way, but like as a Father pitieth his Children, he provideth a Gracious, Heavenly Entertainment; killeth the *best* to invite the *worst* to Supper; the Fatted Calf, the Furniture of Gospel Grace to feast us, that we might have an *Allowance at the King's Table*. The Woman

Gen. 21.11.
12.

Rom. 11.17.

Gal. 4. 9.

Luk. 15. 29

Mal. 3. 17.

Psa. 107. 40.
Psal. 103. 13

2 King. 25.
at 30.

1 Sam. 28. at *Endor* killed a Fat Calf to entertain a distressed *Prince*, but the Father in the Parable killeth *his* to entertain a distressed *Prodigal*. *Abraham* killed his Calf for the sake of *Three Angels*, but He in Luk. 15. 10. the Parable for any *one Sinner that repenteth* to cause a joy among Angels.

9. *The Marrow of rich Forgiveness.* The Forgiveness of Sins (where the poor Soul hath been made sensible of Sin and Wrath, both as guilty and condemned) is such a Provision of the Grace of God, as well resembles *Marrow*. *The Remission of sins that are past*, (Rom. 3. 25.) is a *Hearty*, supporting Diet for us, being * *Health unto the Soul*, and a morsel that Prov. 15. 30 *makes the Bones fat*. When Christ speaks to the Paralytick, (Mat. 9. 2.) *Son be of good cheer*, (Θάρα Τενον, take Heart, Son) *thy Sins be forgiven thee*. Tho his condition might have sunk him to the Heart, as we may gather from the word, yet the News of Remission was enough to recover his Spirits, and put him into Heart again. We may take notice of many a Poor Soul, that hath wanted the sense of Forgiveness, or Pardoning Love to help it, as *Jonadab* observed of *Amnon* (one of the King's Sons) that tho he

he stood in so near a Relation to David, yet he was lean from Day to Day. But Forgiveness has holpen a poor Servant of the Lord's, tho' lean-fleshed, that he hath been satisfied (like David himself) as with Marrow and Fatness, Psa. 63. 5. The Forgiveness of our sins is Health, but the Apprehension of our Guilt dryeth the bones. It breeds Marrow in us, when it hath been brought first as Marrow to us. — *The Lord shall satisfy thy Soul in drought, and make fat thy Bones,* Isa. 58. 11. As there is a Present Refreshment, so it yields an after-Improvement of our Souls, when we are feasted, or fed with the Gracious Sense of Pardon. A Malefactor condemned to die would find a Feast unflavoury, and a Banquet made only to feed him against the day of Slaughter, Jam. 5. 5. but the news of a Pardon would make it sweet and Dainty. Now at the Table of the Gospel there is this Dish of Marrow set. Christ hath such a Plenty in himself, as affords of this sort also, in whom we have — *the Forgiveness of Sins,* Col. 1. 14. So Acts 13. 38. *Be it known unto you therefore, Men and Brethren, that thro' this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins.* We must come indeed in Repentance, and 'tis fit we should, to our Father,

1 Kings 20. with the *Ropes* about our Necks, but he
31. meets us as he did the Prodigal, and
gives *Remission* to us; as he makes a
Feast, so he *pardons* our Fault, that we
may *partake* of all acquitted.

10. *The Food of Knowledge.* I call it
so, as warranted from that expression,
Jer. 3. 15. I will give you Pastors accord-
ing to my Heart, that shall feed you with
Knowledge and understanding. Knowledge
is Provision, your *Souls* are fed by Know-
ledge, as your *Bodies* are by Food. This
is a sort of Spiritual Repast that may
cause the Eater in some measure to ex-
press it like that of *Solomon*——*Tea my*

Eccl. 1. 16 Heart had great experience of wisdom. It
is a Dish, that the *more* we take of,
the clearer we find our * *Eye-sight.* *Jo-*
nathan when he put forth the end of the
Rod that was in his hand, and dipt it in
an honey-comb, and put his hand to his
mouth, his Eyes were enlightned, 1 Sam.

* He was
refreshed,
and reco-
vered his
lost spirits,
whereof
part went
into his op-
tick nerves
and so
clear'd his
sight,
which was

14. 27. He was almost Blind with Fa-
mine, that is, † his Spirits were so weak
for want of Food, that he could not dis-
cern as at other Times; but a little re-

much darkned by Famine, as is usual. *Mr. Pool.* † Being enfee-
bled with extreme Labour and Emptiness, his Eyes waxed dimm,
which now by this little refreshing were enlightened again. *Arthur*
Jackson.

fresh-

freshment reviv'd him, fetcht his Spirits again, and made his Sight clearer; so when *Wisdom* entreth into thine Heart, and *Knowledge* is Pleasant unto thy Soul, (Prov. 2. 10.) it is a Provision that giveth *Understanding* to the Simple. This makes the Eyes of the Spouse like the Fish-pools of Heshbon, (Cantic. 7. 4.)
 * of a clear and perspicuous vision in the mysteries of Christ.

* Fuller,
 Pilgab
 Sight, p.
 1st. p 66.

Now in the Gospel-Entertainment there is this Food of Knowledge ready. Our Great Provider when he maketh a Feast doth not starve our Judgments. He makes ready enough to suffice the *Faculties* of a Man, or the *Graces* of a Christian. This of Knowledge is a Portion of his Feast he sends our Understandings. He provides *Good Doctrine* to rectifie and inform a *Bad Judgment*. The Lord appoints us his Truth, that hereby we may know (and avoid) the *Spirit of Error*, (1 Joh. 4. 6.) The Gospel is the Treasury of *Wisdom*, that however we may be * *Fools for Christ*, yet we may * 1 Cor. 4.
 not appear Fools, and of no Understand- 10.
 ing, in him. We have lost our Knowledge which we had in *Adam* at our first Table in *Paradice*, and therefore have
 Food

Food again at our *second Table* in Christ, that * *renews us in Knowledge*. We had gone so long Fasting, that we were empty of the things of God, but now † *chap. 1. 9.* have a Gospel that we may be † *filled with the knowledge of his Will*. The Knowledge of the Gospel indeed still encreaseth our Appetite, whets our Mind, provokes us into more Enquiries, and follows *Hof. 6. 3.* *Us, until we follow on to know the Lord*; but withall affords so large a measure, that our utmost Capacities may run over, tho' the Hand that fills us doth also press our Measure down. The Gospel is a Feast that contains the utmost encrease of Knowledge, it *hath all* *1 Cor. 13. 2. pr.* *Mysteries and all Knowledge*, and he that *Joh. 7. 17.* partakes of the Entertainment *shall know of the things*, what they are, and find how they are all given of God, to encrease our understanding. It is the Meat and Drink of a Christian to *know*, as it was of Christ, to *do his Father's Will*. The Feast is a Feast of Knowledge, and while you are feeding, you may be adding still to what you have, not only to *Virtue, Knowledge*, as *2 Pet. 1. 5.* that is, one kind of Grace to another, but even to Knowledge it self a larger measure and Degree of Understanding.

11. *The Nourishment of Faith.* As in the Gospel you may be fed with Knowledge, so also *nourished up in the words of Faith and of Good Doctrine.* The Apostle doth very expressly in that place, *Tim. 4. 6.* compare our *Faith*, or reception of the saving Truths of the Gospel, to *Nourishment.* You may eat, but you will not thrive without it. We may have the Word for our Food, but it will not Nourish us, if it be not mingled with Faith to make it nutrimental, *Heb. 4. 2.* For unto us was the Gospel preached as well as unto them, but the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with Faith in them that heard it. Not being mixed,] or as the * Word may import, * *οὐκ ἐμεικται* &c. not incorporated by mixing. The Food must unite, incorporate, be turn'd into an Alimentary Juice, mingle it self † In succum & sanguinem. with our Blood and Spirits to make it nourishing. Thus, Faith must unite and incorporate, mix the Provisions with the New Creature, before we are by the Word of the Gospel nourished up in our Father's House. Faith is so *nourishing* a provision to the New Nature, that the *Just* are said to *live* by it, *Hab. 2. 4.* *Heb. 10. 38.* The *Doctrine* of Faith in the

the Gospel, and the *Grace* of Faith in the Soul, do make a blessed Nourishment in the New Man, when *Both* meet together. Faith is *the Gift of God*, Eph. 2. 8. and the Fruit of Christ's meritorious Purchase, it is given in the behalf of Christ, *Phil.* 1. 29. Faith, as * one expresseth, "hath several Acts, Knowledge, Assent, Fiducial Application, and the Scripture doth by a Synecdoche express the whole Nature of Faith by one Act of it. Now the Gospel Provision affords and maintains such a Principle in the Soul, as exerts Faith in the Complex, and produceth it in all its various Acts. There is *not* a Guest of the True Table *which the Lord hath pick'd out, and not Man*, but he hath Ordained among other Provisions for him *like precious Faith with Us*. There's not a Saint but shall find it in the *All things ready* it is one of the Parts, and not the least of the Entertainment; and it is a Dish to be had at this Feast only. A Man full of Faith, like Stephen, Acts 6. 8. one whom the Entertainment *nourisheth and cherisheth*, and hath had his Belly filled with his Treasure. The Word of Faith which we preach, and your Faith that comes

* Mr. Anthony Burgess, Spiritual Refinings, Fol. 1st. pt. p. 62, and p. 169.

Heb. 8. 2.

2 Pet. 1. 1.

Juk. 14. 17

Eph. 5. 29.

Psal. 17. 14.

Rom. 10. 8. 17.

hearing is some of the *Royal Provision* Dan. 1. 5:
the *King's Meat*, to be found at God's
table only.

12. *The Feast of Holiness*, inward San-
ctification of the Heart by a cleanly pu-
rifying Bunch of *Hyssop*, better than a
Dinner of any other Herbs. This clean
Hyssop may be said for the *Virtue* of it,
as was of the grown Mustard-seed for
its Dimensions, to be the *greatest among* Mat. 13. 32

Herbs. Nay, indeed we are not here
speaking of such a poor, low-statur'd
Hyssop as with us runs upon the ground,
but of that which runs up in the Man

whose Name is the * Branch, (Zech. 6.

2.) into a Tree as high as Heaven:

it is from hence that this purifying
Branch, or Holy Bunch is gathered.

Christ is He who of God is made unto

us — Sanctification — 1 Cor. 1. 30. I

ground the Comparison on the Ceremo-

nial Cleansing of the Leaper, as was in-

stituted under the Law, Lev. 14. 4. where

among other purifying Ingredients, this

8. of the *Hyssop* is one, to which David

alludes, as it Typed out the righteous

Branch to be rais'd to David, Jer. 23. 5.

when he cries out in the Bitterness of

his Soul for this sweet Herb in the Gar-

* Some in-
deed af-
firm litte-
rally that
hæc Plan-
ta in Judæa
arborescet.
Grotius in
Joh. 19. 29

Ezek. 28:
13, &c.

den

den of God, to dress his other Meal
see Psal. 51. 7. *Purge me with Hyssop*
and I shall be clean · as if he had broken
out into this Self-aborrency, “I am

Joh. 13. 10

“filthy Leaper, and I need to eat
“the Dish that is most fit to cleanse me

1 Pet. 1. 16.

“let me be therefore every whit clean

Rev. 22. 11

“thro’ this sanctified Provision made

* Ag. 11. 8.

“ready, being neither * common nor un-

“clean it self. I would be Holy as God

“is Holy, and tho’ by Nature and Pre-

“tence I am now otherwise, yet I would

“not remain filthy still.

Now in the Gospel our Feast-maker
hath also provided this blessed Dish
ready : God hath prepared his Table of
hallowed Bread, Holy, as well as Evan-
gelical Furniture, Holiness it self to Feed

1 Tim. 3. 9.

you with a pure Conscience. As this is

the Will of God, even your Sanctification

on, 1 Thes. 4. 3. so it is the Work of

God to form it, Ezek. 36. 25, 26, 27. And

the Precept of the Gospel requires Holiness,

Heb. 12. 14

without which no Man shall see the

Lord, so the Promise doth encourage us

and the Spirit by an Almighty Operation

works it : He creates a Principle

within that yields it, and a Life within

that acts it ; for ’till Grace be infused

fed into the Heart, it cannot in the Conversation be diffused or shed abroad.

There is Sanctification enough provided to supply our utmost wants thereof; a *Stock* of it prepared, to serve for *Spirit, Soul and Body*, as the Apostle Prayeth for his *Thessalonians* to be thoroughly Feasted with it, *1 Thes. 5. 23.* And the very God of Peace sanctifie you wholly, and I pray God your whole Spirit, and Soul, and Body, be preserved blameless unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. God would not have a Feast to be made under the Gospel without a *universal Holiness*, to run thro' all the Parts of it: Provision that sanctifieth, and Provision sanctified, Holy it self, and to make Us Holy too. Indeed (as he saith*) if * Isa. 34 the very Oxen and the young Asses that²⁴ ear the ground, should eat clean Provender, which had been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan, much more would he assign holy Diet for his Table in these dayes of our Purification. Corrupt † Priests may, but our Great High-Priest will never set any Polluted † Mal. 1. 7 Bread upon his Altar.

13. The Hidden Mannah of Election.
This is one of the glorious Dishes of
our

our Feast, and was garnished from Eternity, to be serv'd up before our Face in

Mat. 13. 35 *Time*: Tho' it hath been a secret kept

Psal. 25. 14. *hid, yet the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him.* If the Lord open a

Rev. 3. 8. *wide Door*, his People may look in and see what God hath done for them from

* 1 Kings Eternity in an * *inner Chamber.* Our

22. 25. Work here is to † *fight*, and hereafter to

† 1 Tim. *him that overcometh will he give to eat*

6. 12. *of the hidden Mannah*, Rev. 2. 17. This

overcoming indeed will be fully known in Heaven, and yet the Saints shall obtain

2 Tim. 2. 3. *lesser Victories before.* The good Souls

* 2 Tim. *diers shall gain the * Mastery*, tho' not

2. 5. *the Crown here, through our Lord Jesus*

1 Cor. 15. *Christ that giveth us the Victory.* For

57. *when we have so much of that Faith*

(spoken of under the eleventh particu-

a Joh. 5. 4. *lar) as to have Victory over the World,*

and other Enemies by it; this is the

overcoming in this Life, that so far as

is consistent with the Knowledge of our

Election here, we are become the Bre-

thren beloved of God, and knowing also

our Election, 1 Thes. 1. 4. Indeed the

Saints do rather taste than eat of this

Hidden Mannah here: God gives them

Job 26. 14. *some, but lo! how small a Portion is it*

now?

now ? 'tis no more than just to save their
 longing ; he reserves it as it were for
 Glory, to bring forth the whole Pot Exod. 16:
 33.
 hereafter : 'Tis too rich a Dish for eve-
 ry Saint while on Earth to spend upon
 in *common*. Thou must be contented to
 see this Dish as it were but now only
 served in, and must not murmur at the
good Man of the House, if it be carried Matth. 20.
 11.
 off (as to a great part) again, and laid
 up in the Secrets of God, from whence
 it came forth, to be kept unto the *Mar-
 riage-Supper of the Lamb*. Rev. 19. 7.

It is clear from the Spirit of Revela-
 tion that there is an Election of *Persons*,
 tho' some would throw in their *Vote*,
 to decide it for *Propositions*, being En-
 mies to the Apostle's word * *Predetermined*, * Rom. 8.
 30.
 and bring in that vain *thing*, *Post-desti-* * Eph. 1. 4.
 1 Cor. 2. 16.
nation ; but the Apostle whq had the
mind of Christ, hath given us a clear
light shining in this dark Place, Eph. 1. 4.
 According as he hath **chosen** us in Him
 before the Foundation of the World. The
 Father pitch'd upon an Elect Compa-
 ny, whom first he gave to *Christ*, and
 afterwards bestow'd *Christ* on them ;
 so 2 *Thef.* 2. 13. God hath from the begin-
 ning **chosen** you to Salvation thro' san-
 H *ctification*

Etification of the Spirit and belief of the Truth: Which place discovers the Election of Means, as well as the End, Faith and Holiness here, as well as Salvation in Heaven. That also is a full Text and a comfortable, 2 Tim. 2. 19. Nevertheless the Foundation of God standeth sure, having this Seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. We may look upon our

Matth. 13. selves as the *lost Sheep of the House of Israel*, but the *Good Shepherd* knows the Sheep by a Mark the Sheep see not. Joh. 10. 14.

Ecc. 11. 2. *to seven, and also to eight; a few particular Women, with Clement also, and other Fellow-Labourers with the Apostle, whose Names are in the Book of Life,*

*Nomina non
nisi singulo-
rum.*

Phil. 4. 3. The Doctrine of Election is so personal, as well as express, that the Spirit of God in the Scripture descends so low as to a Rufus, chosen in the Lord, Rom. 16. 13. and the Elect Lady, 2 Epist. Joh. v. 1. Thus we have a manifestation thro' the Word, of the Secrets in this Pot of Mannah, being the Mystery of his Will, which he hath purposed in himself, Eph. 1. 9. The Scripture also lays it down

absolutely,

absolutely, without any limitations of it to the foreseen Conditions of Man's Faith and Obedience: It is he *hath* Chosen, not as he foresaw we *would* be Holy, Eph. i. 4. but positively that we *should* be Holy. The Lord in *tender* as well as sovereign Mercies, did not look to what we *might* be, (That had left Salvation uncertain to every one) or to what we *would* be, (That might have concluded us all immediately under Wrath) but he lookt to his *own* Pleasure, what we *should* be, when he made us *Vessels of Mercy* (and that makes Salvation certain unto some.) Rom. 9. 23. I say, the Scripture lays it down absolutely, without any *conditionality*: Names are written so close in the Book of Life, that it leaves not room to put in an [It] between. — *The Children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the Purpose of God according to Election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,* Rom. 9. 11. I know * some do Interpret the Place by restraining it to point out God's Election of *Jacob* to a better Condition than *Esau* in the Temporals of this Life: But, 1. *Esau's* Temporal Portion compared with *Jacob's* was not so much be-

* See Dr. Hammond upon the Place.

hind his Brother's, as to make a Parallel to the Divine Love or Hatred, *v. 13. Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.* Now, tho' God did not bestow the Land of *Canaan* upon the Posterity of *Esau*, yet he gave them *Mount Seir*, *Deut. 2. 5.* and he seems to bestow more in outward Things upon his *Person*, than he did on *Jacob*, sets him up as my Lord *Esau* with four hundred Men, which were large *Crusts and Parings* of Common Bounty, to throw a Dog with this *Motto on his Collar, Esau have I hated.* 2. These Men which speak of an Election from foreseen Works in the matters of *Eternity*, would do well to give us some fair Account why the Election then here in *Temporals* (as they suppose it) is yet an Election *not at all of Works.* Now sure if Works take so much with God, that he chooseth from the foresight of them to an *everlasting* State of Happiness, it might seem the more congruous to Reason, that God should have chose the *Temporal Lot* and Condition of those two Brothers, from the same things foreseen: If they resolve it, as they must, into the good Pleasure of God, that he acted as a Sovereign in this Election to

Gen. 32.4.
v. 6.

Rom. 9.13.

Tempo-

Temporals, being said expressly, *not of Works, but of him that calleth*; then why must not God be allowed as well to be sovereign in the other, but ty'd to our Works *there*? Alas! what should we gain by *Limiting the Holy One of Israel*? Rom. 9. 11. Psal 78. 41. for the allowing God a *Sovereignty* doth (as was said before) make Salvation sure unto *some*, whereas the leaving it upon the *Mutability* and unstedfastness of our Wills, had been to make Salvation equally *uncertain*, and very doubtfull, if not impossible to *all*.

The Spirit of God fixeth upon a variety of * Words in the New Testament, to express this Doctrine of Election by, and discovers that the very Calling, that is, an Efficacious, saving Call of Grace in working the New Creature, is but subservient to an *Eternal Purpose*, Rom. 8. 28. but that Purpose carries security in its Bosom, for the *Election* hath always *obtain'd it*, Rom. 11. 7. They are not *vain words*, but * *it is your Life*, in those words of *Peter*, 2 Pet. 1. 10. *Wherefore the rather, Brethren, give diligence to make your* † *Calling and Election* sure. God does not only write down the Names of his Elect in the Book of Life, but he

* *Evangeliz*
Mar. 11. 26
* *Evangeliz*
Rom. 9. 11.
* *Evangeliz*
Act. 2. 23.
* *Deut. 32.*
47.
† It is dangerous to tread on the highest round first, and here it is impossible
Culverwel
The White
Stone,
p. 167.

writes such a *Nature* or *Law* within their *Hearts*, that they may at last be brought to read their *Names* in that other *Volume* of his *Book*.

- I know this *Mannah* we are treating of doth not please every *Man's Taste*; tho' *Grace* counts it pleasant, *Corruption* calls it fulsom, and the *Old Man* in our *Flesh* spits it up again. *Electi-*
 on ! Election ! *This is a hard saying, who*
 Joh. 6. 60. *can hear it ?* alas ! it savours so much of the *Sovereign Grace* of *God*, that *Man* is too prone to *rebel*, and fight against *God*. We have a clear *Specimen* or *Proof* hereof from the *Jews*, when *Christ*
 Acts 2. 40. *Preacht* up this *Subject* to that *untoward* generation ; see *Luk. 4.* from the 25th. to the 29th. Verse ; they bore his *Discourse*, 'till he came to *Limit* the *Grace* of *God*
 Jude 7. 22. *unto* *Conte*, *making* a *Difference*, as, *Tho* there were many *Widdows* in *Israel*, in the *dayes* of *Elias*, yet *unto* none of them was *Elias* sent, save *unto* *Sarepta*, a *City* of *Sidon*, *unto* a *Woman* that was a *Widdow*; and many *Lepers* were in *Israel* in the time of *Elizeus* (or *Elisha*) the *Prophet*, and none of them was *cleansed* saving *Naaman* the *Syrian* : And lo ! now they can bear no longer, but break out into a *Rage*,
 and

and would have cut off the Preacher, tho' the Prince of Life; and murder'd him, if they could, before the time. Acts 3. 15.
 — All they in the Synagogue when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the City, and led him unto the Brow of the Hill, (whereon their City was built) that they might cast him down headlong: They grew outrageous, ἐπλήσθησαν θυμῷ, they were filled with a Stomachful wind, and would have let out That, and the Blood of our Lord at the Brow of the Hill together: Their Fury was precipitant, and would have Tumbled him (if it had been possible) into Hell, for Preaching a Doctrine he brought them down from Heaven.

It is true, that the Grace of the Gospel doth not bring the Elect to Visions 2Cor. 12. 1 and Revelations, and unwritten means of knowing it; it does not exalt them 1. v. 7. above measure, to carry them into the Heights, and open the Book of Election immediately, as it lyes before the Face of God. This is to be wise above what 1 Cor. 4. 6. is written, and to pretend to open what is shut up in the Purposes of Eternal Counsel: For Election was first in God, but

'tis to be *last* seen of Us ; *He began*, but we must *end* with it. We are not to look only to the Purposes of Grace in God's mind from everlasting, but must

* Dr. Good- take in his *Operative Grace* (as * a great
win's Works Man expresseth it) in *Calling*, compre-
Fol. 2d. hended under it. The Grace of the Go-
Vol. on E- spel instead of leaving us to climb up
lection. p.9. to the Throne of God, carries us hum-
bly to the Foot of *Jacob's Ladder*, and
sets us up upon the Round of Sanctifi-
cation that stands next to us, from which

Job 8.7. tho' our *Beginnings* are *small*, yet our *latter End* shall greatly *encrease*, 'till it reach out from the *Root-Grace* in *Election*,

Zech. 4. 7. to the *Top-stone* in *Glory* : It carries us unto the Bible in the written Word, and directs us to read the Transcript,

Col. 2. 14. or the *Hand-writing* within our Heart, and by the Help of this *Fescue* we may

Matth. 22. see *whose Image and Superscription* we bear, and when we discern Grace, we may surely read both our *Election* and the

2 Cor. 3. 3. *Epistle of Christ* together. This brings in

14. *The Royal Dainties of Assurance* : Election and Assurance are both so nigh of kin; that of *twain* they make up (in the Point of Comfort and Satisfaction about

Eph. 2. 15.

about our State) *one* clear Evidence in the *New Man*. From the Knowledge of our *Sanctification* springs the Knowledge of our *Election*, and from the Knowledge of our *Election* springs up *Assurance*. The Chain of Salvation is fastened with sure *Links*, tho' some of the poor Saints can discern neither *end* of it. *Rom. 8. 30.* Moreover whom he did *prædestinate*, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. *Royal Dainties of Assurance.*] It deserves a high Name: *Jacob* in blessing *Asber* his second Son by *Zilpah*, whom she had Named the Son of her *Happiness*, bestows this *King-*
ly Epithite upon his *Table*, *Gen. 49. 20.* Out of *Asber* his Bread shall be fat, and he shall yield **Royal Dainties**. Assurance is the **White Stone**, on which the New Name Copied out of the Book of Life is written, *Rev. 2. 17.* latter part. — And will give him a *White Stone*, and in the Stone a New Name written, which no Man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it. The Holy Ghost seems to allude, as * *Inter-*
preters observe, to the Judicial Custom of some Heathen Nations, in their Acquitting and Condemning Malefactors,

Gen. 30. 13

* *Durham.*
* *Dr. J. Collings,*
Supplement to Mr. Pool's Engl. Annotations.

as

as also in their Elections of men to any Trust or Honour, in all which they were wont to take *white* and *black* Stones; on the *white* Stones were written the Names of the Persons *absolv'd* or *chosen*, and on the *black* Stones was *no* Name written: Now he that received the *Black* Stone, if a *Malefactor*, was surely Cast and *Executed*; if a *Candidate*, or one that stood for an Election, yet (*nigro carbone notatus*) he was rejected; but He that had the *White* Stone, with his Name upon it, was *acquitted* from the Punishment, or honourably *Chosen* into Place or Priviledge: So the Assurance of the Favour of God in Electing or Accepting Grace and Love, is compar'd to the Name written upon the *White Stone* of him that was sav'd alive, or made Choice of. These are the Royal Dainties of the Gospel, which are made ready at this Supper of the Parable, and unto *some* are given, tho' our Father which is in Heaven doth not Carve them to every one that eats of the *Childrens Bread*. Truth of Grace, and Assurance of Grace, are a *Blessed Couple*, tho' they often dwell *asunder*. The Apostle speaks of a * *Plerophory*, or a Full Assurance,

* αὐτὸς τὸν
πληροφ
ειαν.
* ἐν τῇ
πλειονο
μῳ.

Assurance, Heb. 6. 11. and Chap. 10. 22. But the Spirit doth not fill every Sail we hoise, but often breaths in a lesser Gale, when we make towards Immanuel's Land. The Knowledge of our Personal Election and Assurance of Eternal Life, are Royal Dainties that none can receive, except it be given him (in a peculiar manner) from above. We read our Evidences for Heaven (says * an eminent Divine) in the Light of God's Countenance: And as he was a free Agent at first to cast his Eye, so he is still at sovereign Liberty where he will cause his Face to shine.

Joh. 3. 27.

† Dr. Bates's Sermons on Death, p. 171.

Psal. 67. 1.

15. The Evangelical Honey-comb dropping Free-Grace. A Honey-comb of it self drops, you need not wring out the sweetness of it. And when the People were come into the Wood, the Honey dropped: The coming of the People into that Wood had no Influence upon the Honey, nor their continuance by it any Vertue upon the Distillation, but it drop't from its own * intrinsick fluency: So the Grace of God distills of its own accord, it drops upon the Creature freely, this Honey-Dew that descends upon the Mountains of Sion comes of its own accord.

1 Sam. 14. 26.

* i. e. A Natural Disposition while it flows, to fall down in Drops.

- Pfal. 133.3. accord. *The Lord commands the Blessing,*
 and it *tarries* for no concurrence in any
 Mic. 5.7. *of the Sons of Men.* If God doth but
 break his Love to Us, 'tis a Love that
 drops, a Love that distills so fast, we
 need no Hand to squeeze it. Now the
 Gospel is the Treasury where it drops,
 Numb. 13. this is our *Canaan* now that *floweth with*
 27. *Milk and Honey.* Lo ! here God hath pro-
 Job 20.17. vided the *Rivers, the Floods, the Brooks*
 of *Honey and Butter.* Grace is a
 Stream that's *Free*, and runs without De-
 fert, or else it would be a River like *Jor-*
 Psal. 114.3. *dan, quickly driven back.*

- When he hath brought Us into his
 Banquetting-House, we shall see it to
 be his Arms drawn over *the Banner*
 Cantic. 2.4. *of Love ; I will love them freely,* Hof.
 14. 4. It is a Free Gift, and we need
 not be shy to take it : This is a Ho-
 ney that Bring's the King's Blessing, a
Jonathan may come in, and need not
 1 Sam. 14. fear a *Saul's* Curse to eat it. This Ho-
 27, 28. ney-comb of Free-Grace may be mixt
 with all our Acknowledgments we make
 Psal. 101.1. to God, when we *sing of Mercy.* Tho'
common Honey was forbidden to be used
 in any Sacrifice under the Law, *Lev.*
 2. 11. yet we cannot offer the Sacrifice
 of

of Praise under the Gospel, if we mix not *This Honey*, and cry *Grace, Grace,* Zech. 4. 7. lat. pt. unto it. This hath a sweeter Taste than any, it is beyond any Corporal Preparations, being sweeter than Honey or the Honey-comb: *How sweet are thy words unto my Taste, yea sweeter than Honey to my Mouth!* Psal. 119. 103.

16. *The Fatness of God's House in Ordinances:* He hath made ready the Ministry, which he hath given to be Meat, and Ordinances as the Dishes in which the Feast is serv'd. He appoints Divine Institutions as Food for Nourishment, and Divine Officers to administer the Banquet too: He affords a Divine Presence in his own Appointments, which fattens and fills them up unto us: *His Paths drop Fatness*, when he **walks** Psal. 65. 11 *in the midst of the seven Golden Candlesticks.* Rev. 2. 1. There be *Fat Sacrifices* in God's House, tho' we can perform but poor *lean Service*. When we bring our own, we offer *lean Kine*; but if we offer *his*, they are *Fatlings* that come up with *Acceptance upon his Altar.* Isa. 60. 7. We are apt indeed to *wait upon the Lord*, and attend 1 Cor. 7. 35. *with much Distraction*, but lo! in God's House when we see what he hath done, there

- Lev. 1. 12. there we shall behold *the Fat and the Head in Order*. God's House is rich, you shall meet with enough to spend on *there*, and to carry home besides. Many a Favourite of God's, when he hath gone from an Ordinance, hath found
- 2 Sam. 11. 2. that a *Mess of Meat hath followed him from the King*. Oh! the Stores that God hath brought forth in Ordinances, as Scriptures, Sermons, Sacraments, and a *House-full of Prayer and Praise*, by which he says, (as to his People, at the
- Ezek. 39. slaughter of Gog) *Ye shall be filled at my Table!* If you go into the Sanctuary and enquire, you shall find God doth not keep an empty House for you, but he makes such Provisions in the Ordinances for his Guests, that *they shall be satisfied with the Fatness of thine House*.
- Psal. 36. 8. *17. The Supplies of the Spirit of Jesus*. Ordinances will not of themselves be a
- Rom. 1. 4. Feast without God's Spirit: He must be a *Spirit of Holiness* to regenerate, and a *Spirit of residence* to inhabit, a *Spirit to change*, and a *Spirit to dwell in us* that may *abide with us for ever*. Now
- Joh. 14. 16 that at this Feast he is wont to shed on us
- Tit. 3. 5. the *Renewings of the Holy Ghost*. It is the Office of the Spirit here to put us into

into a Capacity to glorifie God and enjoy him. The Spirit *stamps* a Divine Impression, and then *witnesseth* to us that we are the *Children of God*. We lose much of the *Savour* of the Word, when we have forgotten how it *soundeth forth*; the Spirit therefore is provided to quicken and refresh our Memories and Understandings, when it *brings all things to our Remembrance*: It is to *help our Infirmities* in Prayer; we know not what to Pray for as we ought, till the Spirit worketh a Sense of what we need, and stirreth up a Praying Frame in us. Christ had the Spirit *without measure*, an inexpressible *Effusion* of the Holy Ghost was poured forth on him, and he hath made ready some *Droppings* of that Spirit to descend on *Us*, as we sit at Meat. When your Spirit is faint, still he hath the *Residue of the Spirit* for you, when you cannot eat as you would of the King's Venison, God hath then provided you his Spirit to quicken you to your Meat, and make your Stomach sharper. You need not rise without a Supply of the Holy Spirit, where you may (like the Disciples) according to your measure, be filled with

Rom. 8. 16.

Joh. 14. 26.

Rom. 8. 26.

Joh. 3. 34.

Act. 13. 52.

the

the Holy Ghost. God's Spirit will make up the Imperfections of our own, and be helpfull still to furnish us, tho' we want spiritual Blessings in any heavenly things whatever : *I will pour out my Spirit unto you, Prov. 1. 23. I will put my Spirit within you, Ezek. 36. 27.* If you have had a *little* measure of the Spirit of God at one time, he hath prepared enough to infuse a *Double Portion*, which you shall receive perhaps at another time from the Fulness of the same Spirit. It is not only a Stock that will reach to some *few Individuals*, as suppose a Portion to Me and to Thee, but a supply for the *whole Israel* of God. And we may now under the Gospel expect a more plentiful Effusion of the Spirit to come, than hath been seen yet in Drops, and wait for the full *Shower, until the Spirit be poured from on high, Isa. 32. 15.* And in a word then, if you were never so greedy after this New Wine, you might

Eph. 5. 18. *It will be filled with the Spirit.*

18. *The Morsel of Hope for them that fail not to sit with the King at Meat. We are saved by Hope, Rom. 8. 24.* We are sometimes tost in a Storm at Sea, we are ready to be drown'd with our

own Tumultuous Waves, but Hope steps
in as an Anchor of the Soul, and saves
our Ship from splitting, that we make
no Wrack upon the *Fair Havens* side.
The Sea is *safe*, tho' it be not *smooth*;
thou sailest on to Heaven : Thy Ship
may reel, thy Table shake, thy Banquet
for a little moment lose its relish ; thy
Fears may cause thee to apprehend the
Storm will surely make thee lose thy
Meal, but so long as thou keepst thy
fear, and holdst by Christ that sits at
Table with thee, thy Fears will shortly
vanish, and thou shalt find a Hand to
pick thy Morsel up : Tho' long at *Sea*,
yet thou wilt quickly get a View of that
Cape of Good Hope thro' Grace : The Hope
of the *Hipocrite* may even dash him out
out of Countenance, but the Hope and
Expectation of the *Righteous* is found at
this Banquet to be a Hope that maketh
not ashamed. He that feedeth at home,
that is, hopes God will be mercifull, be-
cause he is *temperate in all things*, or
wrongs and defraudeth none, hath not
one solid Morsel that will yield saving
Nourishment ; but he that sets his Hope
on Jehovah, apprehending none but a
God in Christ to save him, has obtained
I the

2 Thef. 2.
16.

Job 8. 13.
Prov.

Rom. 5. 9

the *Better hope*, and got a true Portion of the Feast. This Entertainment hath all in every kind we need, and our Days would be spent without Hope, if our Help did not ly here; but as the Prophet speaks, the Lord will be the Hope of his People, and the Strength of the Children of Israel, *Joel 3. 16.* latter part. And again, *The Eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy, Psa. 33. 18.* If thou hast yet obtained help of God in no other kinds, thou mayst however, so long as thou art found at Gods Feast, find *hope continually*. If thou art not plentifully rich in Faith, thou mayst be poor, and yet meet with Hope, *Job 5. 16.* *So the Poor hath hope*, low in thy Spirits, and yet lifted upwards, that thou dost not sink into Despondency, or stick, when thou art sunk in the miry Clay.

Psa. 71. 14

19. *The full meal of Contentment.* When thou hast eaten and art full, thou shalt surely feel *quietness in thy Belly*. Thou shalt obtain so much to make up a Spiritual Interest, that thy Portion in God will quiet thee, tho thou hast not thy *Part* in many other Things. — *I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith*

to be content, Phil. 4. 11. Tho carnal desires will be discomposed, yet a Gracious mind will be settled, when the *will of the Flesh* is contradicted. The whole World will be a common *Ordinary*, and too light, when this *Feast of the Lord* in the Ballance is weighed against it. If the World leaves thee poor, and the Gospel makes thee rich, thou wilt not repine at the loss of their *Skins* and *Dung*, when the *Fatlings* themselves are ready. Thou shalt see so much in Christ at this Plenteous Table, that thou wilt not regard to *make Gold thy confidence, or fine Gold thy trust*; Silver will be unto thee as Dross, that is, thou wilt take the World as it is, *and be content with such things as thou hast*; having Food and Raiment (I mean spiritually, Food and Raiment out of the *King's Stores*) thou wilt be *therewith content* (far more delighted with thy *Treasure*, than if *another King* should open thee his rich *Exchequer*.) If thou hast thy Father's *Inheritance*, thou wilt leave other Children *Rattles*. Others may cry out for *Corn, and Wine, and Oyl*, and think they can never have enough of this World, tho they had never so much of the Gospel

Job 31, 24:

Heb. 13. 5:

1 Tim. 6. 8

Psa. 4. 6.
Hos. 2. 8.

spel with it, but a *Barrel of meal* and a *Cruse of Oyl* (a little of this World) shall suffice a poor Woman in *Sarepta*, when God sends an *Elijah* to her. A Generation of *Murmurers and Complainers* may use *their* Language which came out of the *Wildernels*, *Would God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan*: But an *Israelite* indeed, a Soul in Christ, is content, thô he hath some
 Jude v. 16. * *Pricks in his Eyes, and Thorns in his*
 Josh. 7. 7. *side, because the Lines are fallen on this*
 last words. *side of it. The Increase of God contents*
 Joh. 1. 47. *him, having gain'd an Interest in his Son*
 * Num. 33 *Christ Jesus, who is all in all to him.*
 55.

20. *The Refreshments of the Peace of Conscience.* A good Conscience seems to be a Table spread in the very Soul, where we may sup by our selves in an inner Chamber: for as *Solomon* says, *He that is of a merry Heart hath a continual Feast*, Prov. 15. 15. Peace in thy Soul is a little, private Banquet, the King sets
 Job 31. 17 by, where thou mayst eat of thy Morsel alone. When the *Blood* of Sprinkling (we spake of under the sixth Particular) is drank down, it fetcheth out all the *Evil Spots* of Conscience, — *having our Hearts sprinkled from an evil Conscience,*
 Heb.

Heb. 10. 22. Conscience would quickly cry against us, if God had not provided at this Feast enough to stop its *mouth*; yea, the *Soul* would die, if the *Conscience* had not the Food of God to live on, as the *Child* would be starv'd, if the *Nurse* were not fed. But lo! the Gospel hath a Table that hath *abundance of Peace* upon it, Peace to feed on publickly, when at an Ordinance, there be others that are *dipping their hands with us in the Dish*, and Peace to feed in our *Solitudes*, while no Eye beholds us. The Invitation unto the Feast is *Peace on Earth*, the Ministerial Waiters at the Table are (a) *preaching Peace by Jesus Christ*, the things ready are *the things that do belong unto our Peace*; the Apostle wrote not one Epistle, when he sent *Messes* unto the Churches, but it came still to them with these Refreshments, **Grace and Peace to you*. The Gospel serves it in most excellently, *Rom. 5. 1. Therefore being justified by Faith, we have Peace with God thro' our Lord Jesus Christ*. Tho' there is a *noise of War in thy Camp*, thy Corruptions fight, and *justle one against another*: nay, not only *Egyptian against Egyptian*, but an *Egyptian smiting an Hebrew*;

Psa. 72. 7.

Mat. 26 23

Luk. 2. 14

*Act. 10. 36

^b Luk. 19.

* Rom. 1. 7

1 Cor. 1. 3.

* 2 Cor. 1. 2

Gal. 1. 3.

* Eph. 1. 2

Phil. 1. 2.

* Col. 1. 2.

1 Thes. 1. 1

* 2 Thes. 1. 4

Exod. 32.

17.

Nahum 2.

4.

Isa. 19. 1

Exod. 23.

brew; Corruption opposeth Grace, and maketh an *uprore* in thy Soul; yet the
 Heb. 7. 2. Gospel hath a *Prince of Peace* to allay
 Psa. 147. 14 the Tumult, and to make *Peace in thy Borders*. There is Provision made for a Blessed Calm upon thy Soul, when the Son of God shall rebuke thy Storm, and say to the *Winds* that made it, tho' furious *Blasts* from Satan, *Peace, be still*. Thou shalt see it to be *fair weather* upon the Kings Feast-day. *Peace I leave with you, my Peace I give unto you, not as the World giveth, give I unto you,* Joh. 14. 27. In a word, here is a Feast you may *Sleep* well after, not in Sin, or Security, but in a Refreshment, or *Repose* of your Spirits in the Peace of Conscience.

* Isa. 61. 3

21. *The Oyl of Joy* *. It was the Blessing of *Asber*, that *he should dip his Foot in Oyl*, Deut. 33. 24. and be as it were *over shoes* in his Inheritance, where
 Psa. 65. 11 God's *Paths dropped fatness*. It is clear in Scripture, that Oyl by the Appointment of God was put to various uses. The Children of *Israel* were commanded with Oyl to * *dress their Lamps*, and with a finer to *dress their † meat* in the Legal Sacrifices, and with a most refined

* Exod. 25
 6. & v. 37.
 compared.
 † Lev. 2. 4,
 5. &c.

ned

ned Oyntment made of various * *Spices* * Exo. 30.
after the Art of the Apothecary, to † a. 23. 25.
*oint the Tabernacle, and his * Furni-* † v. 26.
ture, by all which was Typified that Spi- * v. 27. &c.
ritual Oyl which the Gospel now afford-
eth: we have now an Oyl, an Oyl of
*Joy that feeds the * Candle of the Lord,* * *Oleum*
and makes it burn comfortably; an Oyl *flammi ali-*
of Grace that feeds the Lamp of our Pro- *moniam sup-*
fession, that we be not in the Dark at *peditat,*
** midnight, when we should see to go* *Moller. enar*
out and meet the Bridegroom; we have *in Psalmos.*
now also an Oyl to dress our Sacrifice, *Pf. 45. 7.*
since we have received an Unction from * *Mar. 25.*
the Holy One, 1 Joh. 2. 20. an Oyl that *3. 4, 5, 6. 8.*
fattens our Entertainment, and an Oyl,
as we sit at meat, that makes our Face to *Psa. 104. 15*
shine. There is an Oyl of Joy commu-
nicated to the Head, our Lord Jesus
Christ, and an Oyl of Joy imparted to
his Members. This Box of precious Oynt-
ment was poured on his Head by a
greater than Mary † Magdalen; God a- † *Mat. 26. 7*
noints him, Therefore God, thy God, *Joh. 11. 2*
hath anointed thee with the Oyl of Gladness
above thy Fellows, Psa. 45. 7. latter part.
So Isa. 61. 1. The Spirit of the Lord God
is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed
me — He is therefore in the New Testa-

* *Xριστός*
Kveltis, Luk.
 2. 26. part.

ment styled by way of eminence the *Christ of God*, and * *the Lord's Christ*, which signifies the *Lords Anointed*. Now at the Feast his *Members*, in some Conformity to their *Head*, are anointed also. He that *ordained a Lamp for his anointed*; and *made the Horn of David to bud*, hath also a *Horn of Salvation* to pour the *Anointings of the Spirit* on us. God's Children may suck in this Oyl plentifully at the Feast, where there be Springs of Joy to feed a *chosen Vessel*. *Thou preparest a Table before me, — thou anointest my Head with Oyl*, Psa. 23. 5.

Jer. 16 3.
 latter part.

v. 7.

22. *The Cup of Consolation with the Wine of the Kingdom running over*. The Cup of Consolation was a Cup for Mourners, a Portion mingled more especially to support them at the Death and Loss of Dear Relations, and tho' used commonly among the Jews, yet was deny'd them, when God had taken away his Peace from them, even *loving kindness and mercies*; — *neither shall men give them the Cup of Consolation to drink, for their Father, or for their Mother*. The Cup of Consolation was a little to sweeten the *Bitterness* unto their Children after their Parents had *tasted Death*. Now the

the Feast of the Gospel hath its *Cup* of Consolation to *wash off* sadness from *them that mourn in Zion*; it hath the *Wine* of the Kingdom for the Children she brings forth, when they are *bowed down heavily*, as one that mourneth for his Mother, because of the Afflictions of the Church of God. Nay, suppose the Trouble should arise more from a Reflection upon their own Personal State, this Cup of Consolation is then to wash off their Fears, least they should drink of *the Wine of wrath out of the Cup of Indignation*. The Wine of the Gospel is a refreshing Cordial from the Grace of God, to cheer up drooping Spirits, and comfort heavy Hearts. It is a *Cup of Salvation*, Psa. 116. 13. to a poor Soul that hath been afraid of that *Red-wine* in the *Threatning*, lest he should *pledge* it in the Second Death. A Man's Body, when his Spirits are low, needeth *Recruits*, Prov. 31. 6. *Give strong Drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine unto those that be of heavy Hearts*, and so in Paul's Advice to Timothy, 1 Tim. 5. 23. *Drink no longer water, (that is, such as was commonly us'd at Meals in those hotter Climates, as we drink Beer) but use a little wine for thy*

Rev. 14. 10

thy Stomach's sake, and thine often infirmities. In like manner the Spirit of a Man, when Wounded, or broke and sunk within him, doth need *Wine*, the Wine of the Kingdom, that is the manifestations of the Love of Christ to chear it; for the Spirit of a man may sustain his Infirmities, (that is, he may bear up under outward Trouble he meets with in the Flesh) *but a wounded Spirit who can bear?*

Prov. 18. 14. Such a one must have the Cup of Consolation from Christ's own Hand, for *his Love is better than wine*, Song. 1. 2. *The Roof of his mouth* when he speaks a kind pleasant word, *like the best wine, goes down exceeding sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak*, Song. 7. 9. If God's Children be sunk down thro' long heaviness, and be-

Psa. 13. 3. gin to *sleep the Sleep of Death* in their own sad Apprehensions, yet a Cup of this pleasant Wine from Christ, on a sudden makes an Alteration, and breaks out in Praises; *I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.* Blessed Consolation! Now the Gospel hath provided a Full Cup of this. This, is that precious Cluster, where the new wine is found in it. *He that loveth me, shall be loved of*

Ma. 65. 8.

my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest my self to him, Joh. 14. 21. latter part: So v. 23. latter part, My Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. What a Heavenly Nectar is this Cup of Consolation! you may drink it at Ordinances in the Golden Vessels of the Temple, where there needs at this Banquet of mine to be no * Inspectours or Overseers set to mind you, lest you prove Spiritual wine-bibbers at these Vessels filled up to the Brim; no Eyes of the Feast, to see you do not drink too much, as is reported to have been customary at the Oriental Feasts, among the Jews and Persians: But you may drink abundantly of the Love of Christ, and yet not be drunk with Wine. This Cup of Consolation is most excellently represented in the Cup of Blessing, where at the Communion of the Blood of Christ, he saith unto his Friends, Drink ye all of it. Lo! here it is seen how it giveth its colour in the Cup, and moveth it self aright, by shewing forth the Lord's Death until he come (even a second time to Judgment.) The Gospel is like those water-pots that stood in Cana at the Marriage Feast, they yielded water at the beginning,

Dan. 5. 2.
Esth. 5. 6.

* ἀνωγορίαι,
inspectores
vini.

Weemse
Christian
Synagogues.
pag. 209.

† οὐθαλαμοὶ
Godwins
Hebrew-
Rites, pag.
45.
Song. 5. 1.

1 Cor. 10.
16.
Mat. 26. 27

Prov. 23.
31.
1 Cor. 11:
26.

Joh. 2. 7. 9.

ginning, but afforded *wine* unto the Guest before they rose up : So, as Christ was represented first by *water*, his Love is now shed abroad like *Vine* : Oh ! Blessed is the *Benjamin* in whose *Sack* this Silver Cup is found ! These Consolations of our God abound, *my Cup runneth over*. Oh ! the Depth of these Streams of Love, when we swim in the *Rivers of his Pleasure* ! how incomparable is the Wine of the Kingdom, beyond any other Blood of the Grape.

Gen. 44. 12

Pla. 23. 5.

Deut. 32.
14.

23. The continual Diet of Perseverance.

'Tis said of *Jehoiachim*, that he was so provided for by the King of Babylon, that he did continually eat Bread before him all the Days of his Life ; and for his Diet, there was a continual Diet given him of the King of Babylon, every Day a Portion, untill the Day of his Death, all the Days of his Life, Jer. 52. 33, 34. So in the Gospel there is a *Daily Provision of the King's meat*, Grace to feed thee every Day for new work fresh : He will persevere to relieve thee on thy way, that thou mayst persevere to come thy *Journeys-End* home : He will continue thy *Meat*, because he will not have thee to break thy *Work* off, before thou hast made a

Dan. 1. 5.

Full

all end of it. He will feed thee, be-
 cause Grace will *finish* what Grace hath
 begun : He that *hath begun a good*
work in you, shall also confirm you unto the
end, 1 Cor. 1. 8. Thou shalt not be kept Phil. 1. 6.
 upon the Corn of Heaven for *one Day*
only, or ten Dayes, or Twenty Days, or a
whole Month, as they did eat of the Quails Num. ii. 19
 in the *Israelitish* Camp, but thou shalt
 have Grace to *stablish, strengthen, settle*
thee to thy Live's end, and keep thee on
unto Faith unto Salvation. 1 Pet. 5. 10.
 Pet. 1. 5.

24. Lastly, *The Fruit of the Tree of* Rev. 2. 7.
Life. Fruit is wont at Entertainments
 to be last served in, and so I place it
 last; for *Glory* which is the Fruit of the
 Tree of Life, shall begin where Grace
 here ends. There may be indeed some
Foretastes of the *Marriage-*
Supper of the Lamb, and it is enough for Rev. 19. 9.
 an *Israelite*, so long as in the Body, to
 have a *Cluster* or some few at most from
 the Edge of *Canaan*; he must be caught
 up into *Paradise* before he can gather the
Full Vintage; he must take possession of 2 Cor. 12. 4
 that better Countrey, before he can eat
 of the *Tree of Life which is in the midst*
 of the *Paradise of God*, Rev. 2. 7. It is
 fit

fit, my Brethren, that both you and I should be now content with *Grace*: tho' I have been enabled to lay before you the *Mess* and *Drink* which will enable us to

Joh. 4.34. *the Will of God*, yet I cannot climb the

Rev. 3.12. *Tree of Life* for you, to bring down one

Rev. 22. 2. of the *New Jerusalem* any one of those

Twelve manner of Fruits, which grow in Plenty upon this *Tree of Life* above.

will be the work of Eternity, when our

Pla. 89.29. *Days are as the Days of Heaven*, to be

hold these *Precious Things* that are

Deut. 33.14 *forth by the Sun, the Sun of Righteousness*

Mal. 4. 2. in *Heaven*; for *Eye hath not seen* them

1 Cor. 2.9. here, save the *Eye of Faith* only. And

therefore so much may suffice us at the

Threshold of our Father's House, on the

Joh. 7. 37. *Great Day of the Feast*.

The Fifth General Thing propounded was to shew what Excellent *Properties* there are in the Provisions of this Great Supper.

1 Property 1. *Transforming*. There is a marvelous

Efficacy put into these Provisions

that begets a *Divine Likeness*. Ye shall

be *like God*; not in that bad, lying

the Devil intended it, when he deceived

our first Parents with a *Deceitful God*

likeness, *Gen. 3. 5. Ye shall be as Gods*

knowing

knowing good and evil, whenas it only transformed them and their Posterity into the Black and Filthy Image of the Devil. We are by *Nature* Partners with that which entred into the *World*, and *Rom. 5. 12.* defileth, but by *Grace* are made *Partners of the Divine Nature*, 2 Pet. 1. 4. When it is said of the *Poor*, they have the Gospel preached to them, the Original *Mat. 11. 5.* expresseth it in the * *Passive*, are Gospellized, transformed into the Image of the *last words.* Truths they hear, made other sort of Creatures. Thus, the Provisions of the Gospel Feast have an efficacious, converting influence thro' the Operations of the *Holy Ghost*, that by our Participation, we are changed into the same *2 Cor. 3. 18* Image of God we see.

2. *Wholsom.* Other Diet, if we eat *2 Property* it, we may prove the worse after; in killing hunger it may create *Diseases*, but this is for your health. The Gospel is *Acts 27. 34* wholsom in every part of it. The Guests at this Entertainment may safely feed of any Dish that God hath set before them. Indeed wicked men that are received *Ps. 68. 21.* solv'd to go on still in their *Trespases*, may cry out like those Sons of the Prophets, 2 Kings 4. 40. Oh thou man of God! there

there is Death in the pot. But if God throws in *Meal*, or mixeth his Loving Kindness and mercies with it, let others throw in *their Lap full of wild Gourds*, there is still *no harm in the Pot.* Every Guest may adventure *safely*, it is Food that will need no *Physick*, unless we *abuse* our Morsel, and play the wanton with it. It is wholsom, and never hurts any, but such as *provoke the wrath of God to fall upon them*, while it is yet in *their mouths*, like those *Israelites*, while chewing Dainties in their Teeth, that provok't the Founder of the Feast, *who slew the fatterers of them.*

2 Kings 4.
39, 40.

Psa. 78.30
31.

3 Property

3. *Delightful to every renewed Palate.* Christ to a Believer hath no ill Taste with him. Christ, tho' considered in his lowest Estate of Humiliation (in the Grave) where others have lookt upon him as a *Carcase*, yieldeth meat unto our Faith in a *Pleasant Vessel.* We may say of the *Lion of the Tribe of Judah*, as *Samson* did of that young Lion that roared against him by the Vineyards of *Timnath*, * *Out of the Eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness.* It seems to be represented well by the *Israelitish Manna* in the *Pleasantness* of

Rev. 5. 5.

Judg. 14.5

* v. 14.

its Taſt, which reliſht according to what every Man liked beſt, as *Auguſtine* hath Noted out of the *Rabbins*, tho' * *others* * *Fuller's* conjecture that Rabbinical Tradition fabulous. However as to the Celeſtial *Piſgah-* *ſight, 2d.* *pt. p. 53.* *Mannah*, or *Bread that came down from* *Joh. 6. 50.* *Heaven*, we may cite the Experience of every Chriſtian that hath *taſted the Lord* *Pſal. 34. 8.* *is good*, to evince its Delicacy to the Pa- late; who will agree not only to ſay an *Equality* unto any thing they like, but to witneſs a *Transcendancy* herein above all Creature-ſweetneſs. There is nothing bitter in this Evangelical Entertainment, but the People of God in all can experience that he hath given them *Pleasant things for Meat: I ſat un-* *Lam. 1. 11* *der his ſhadow*, (ſaith the Church) and *his Fruit was ſweet unto my taſte*, Song 2. 3. The Food of Heaven is not firſt *sweet in the Mouth*, and then like the Book in the *Revelation*, as ſoon as 'tis eaten *the Belly is bitter*: But as 'tis ſweet in the *Mouth*, it retains the Property, and becomes ſweet in the *Stomach* alſo. *Rev. 10. 10* It is Cordial in the *Aſt*, and Comfortable in the *Remembrance* too; for it is the Morſel only of the *Sinner*, when he *eats the Fruit of his own Doings*, that *na. 3. 10* breeds

breeds so ill a *Digestion*, as when he
 Job 20. 20. hath eaten, surely he shall not feel quiet-
ness in his Belly.

4 Property 4. *Sufficing.* This Feast is enough for
Ministers, and enough for *People* too,
 Jer. 31. 14. *I will satiate the Soul of the*
Priests with Fatness, and my People shall
be satisfied with my Goodness, saith the
Lord: So Psal. 132. 15. *I will abundantly*
bless her Provision, I will satisfy her
Poor with Bread. *Zion's Poor* (in *Spi-*
rit) shall have Bread enough for an
 Alms at the Door of God's House: Yea,
 Christ will have them come in, and sit
 Prov. 7. 18. down at his Table, and take *their fill of*
Love.

3 Property 5. *Not Surfeiting or Cloying.* There
 is no Intemperance in the Gospel, when
 we feed in the highest Degree upon it.
 In other Feasts the Guests can take but
 Part, and in that may take too much,
 but in the Gospel, if we do not take of
 all, we shall take, and have too little.
 Literal Provisions will surfeit, we may
 nauseate and thro' an Excess bring them
 up again. *Hast thou found Honey?* says
 the Wise-man, *eat so much as is suffici-*
ent for thee, Prov. 25. 16. but v. 27. in-
 timating an Excess, he addeth, *It is not*

the Great Supper of the Parable.

131

good to eat much Honey ; the end of the foregoing sixteenth Verſe is a Reason, *leſt thou be filled therewith and vomit it.* There may be an *overcharging* * with *ſurfeiting and drunkenneſs* at our own Tables, while our Table may become a ſnare unto us, but we can never ſurfeit upon Spiritual Proviſions, 'till our Corruption turns our Stomach, and we turn the Grace of God into Wantonneſs. A Holy Gueſt, tho' he be filled with the Wine of the Goſpel, is filled at a Feaſt in which is *No Exceſs* : Other Wine will intoxicate, but the Wine of the Spirit which poſſeſſeth our Heart, will never hurt the Brain. The more we have eaten and drank in his Preſence who hath prepared our Table, the more ready we may find our ſelves to go about our Father's Buſineſs, contrary to the effect of other Tables, which indiſpoſe both the Body and the Mind, when the Belly is fill'd with Meats. In a word, we need not at this Feaſt of the Parable, fear Intemperance, as Daniel did, when he took care leſt he ſhould be defiled with the Portion of the Kings Meat, and of the Wine which the King drank.

* The Throat is a ſlippery place, and a ſin may get down ere you are aware, Dr. Manington on Jude, p. 414.
Luk. 21. 34
Pſal. 69. 22
Jude v. 4.

Eph. 5. 18.

Luk. 13. 28

Pſal. 23. 5.

Luk. 2. 49.

Dan. 1. 8.

6 Property

6. *Undiminisbable.* *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever, Heb. 13. 8.* He hath Provision, of which one Guest hath not the *less*, because another Guest hath *more*. This great Stock in the Gospel never *wastes*, no more than the Widdow's *Barrel of Meal*, or her *Cruise of Oyl*, after *Elijah eat thereof*. If we eat and drink never so long of God's Provision, he never needs to *buy* in any new Store. *Ordinary Food* will diminish, but in *Extraordinary*, we leave as full a Table as we *find*. Tho' *Guests increase*, the *Diet* still keeps the *same*. When Christ feedeth the Multitude *of* the Gospel, he worketh a greater Miracle than when he fed the multitudes *in* it; because *in* the Gospel we read only of *Fragments* taken up, but *of* the Gospel it self, when Men have *eaten* sufficiently, or *well drunk*, the *Feast* remains: This Box of Oyntment is *broken*, and yet 'tis always *whole*.

1 Kings

17. 14.

v. 13.

Luk. 9. 17.

Joh. 2. 10.

7 Property

7. *Incorruptible.* It is not like the *Vituals* of the *Gibeonites*, that had all the *Bread* of their Provisions *dry and mouldy*: It is *unperishable*, and this *Mannah* will not melt and consume away, as other *Mannah* did. The Bread that God gave

Exod. 16.

21.

the *Israelites* in the *Wilderness forty Tears*, would not preserve from *Putrefaction*, but when over-kept, like the rest of common Provision, *bred worms and stank*, *Exod. 16. 20.* And tho' some of it was put into a *Pot*, as the Lord *Exod. 16. 33.* commanded *Moses*, and laid up before the Lord in the *Ark of the Testimony*, to be kept as a Memorial throughout *their Generations*, that the Children which should be born might see wherewith God had Nourisht their Fathers in the *Wilderness*, yet it was preserved thus from after-putrefaction, for so many Ages, by a special Miracle attending it, and not from the inherent Qualification of the Food it self, and therefore in its best *Psal. 39. 5.* Estate we may reckon it the *Meat that* *Joh. 6. 27.* *perisheth*; especially, considering that even this Pot of *Mannah* now ceaseth, as well as the whole Jewish State. But the Gospel is a Food in its own Nature incorruptible, a Provision as well as an *Inheritance that fadeth not away.* When *1 Pet. 1. 4.* other *Victuals* will utterly *perish in their* *2 Pet. 2. 12* *own Corruption*, this is the *Meat that endureth to Life eternal*, *Joh. 6. 27.* latter part.

8 Property

8. Lastly, *Perpetual Nourishment*, and *the Partaker kept alive for ever*. He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst, Joh. 6. 35. latter part. And he that eateth of this Bread shall live for ever: He shall never pine or dye away for want of Meat or Drink: It shall implant such a *Nutritional Habit*, as shall secretly, in the greatest Difficulty, keep the Soul alive. Hunger shall never kill, and Thirst shall never hurt Believers. To conclude, other Feasts have supply'd the Wants of the Body but for as many Dayes as the Feast lasted, and the Guests have been quickly empty, and the Virtue of their feeding *lost*, as well as their Entertainment *over*: But the Nourishment received, the Seed of Grace obtain'd at this Rich Feast of Plenty, is a perpetual and enduring Habit, or Principle of *Grace*, that will spring up in *Glory*.

VI.

The *Sixth* thing is to evidence what *suitableness* there is in these Provisions of the Gospel to the *Condition* of poor Gospel-Sinners, or to discover that the *Case* of any Soul may be suited among these *All things ready* *First,*

First, The Gospel hath Enlivening Provisions, suited to the Condition of dead Souls. It hath got wherewithall to infuse Life into them, either the *Being* of Life, as they are found in a *Dead State*, or the *Degree* of Life, as they are fallen under any *Dead Frames* of Spirit.

1. The Gospel hath enlivening Provisions, suited to the Condition of dead Souls, *as they are found in a dead State.*

Indeed it is necessary that the Gospel become first a *vital* Principle, before it is made a *Nutrimental*: It must quicken the *Dead*, before it can feed the *Living*, and raise Sinners out of a *Grave*, before it sets them down at *Table*. *Nourishment* must presuppose *Life*. The *Being* of the New Creature is first in Order, and afterwards *Food* to maintain the Growth of it. A Man cannot feed, tho' he hath all Things before him, until he be quickned and made a Living Man: So they that are spiritually Dead (that is, **separated** from all Spiritual Converse and Communion with God, remaining still as they were cut off from him in the first *Adam*) can do nothing at this Table, which requires us to touch, taste and handle the Provisions

of it. *Spiritual Death* is unfit for *Spiritual Dainties*; you must be translated out of a Dead State, and chang'd from Dead Works (that is, advanc'd beyond the Power of Nature in the most active refined Morals) before you can *serve* Acts 14.15 *the Living God*, or receive the Gospel-Food. The Priviledge of the Gospel lyes in *receiving* Grace first, to quicken and enable us to *do* in the strength of Grace after. It is not the Dead, so long as they are dead, can meddle with these things. The first thing the Gospel can do for us, is to *beget* us by Jam. 1. 18. *the Word of Truth*, and then with its Nourishment to *bring us up*. The *Breath of Life* must pass *upon* us, before the *Bread of Life* can be eaten by us. Dead Sinners may be *brought* to some outward means of Grace, and so a *Carkass* may be *stir'd*, and held up by an External Force, while Meat is set before it; but there must be an inward *Principle* in both, to take Food and digest it, or live and grow by it. You may as soon stand to purpose with a Dish of Provisions before a *Carkass*, and put Meat forcibly into the Mouths of Dead Men, as expect the Plenty of the Gospel should

should yield any Nourishment or Benefit to Dead Sinners, before they have gotten true Life in them. In a word, they must be *Created in Christ Jesus*, or Eph. 2, 10. the Provision is lost, tho' you Carve out Dainties to them.

Now the Gospel hath its *Enlivening Provisions*, suited to a *Dead State*: And you being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your Flesh, hath he quickened together with him, Col. 2. 13. The Life of Jesus is prepared to be made 2 Cor. 4. 10. manifest to create Life, as it finds thee Dead in trespasses and sins. Our Blessed Lord takes an occasion to reveal this in the Spirit, when he made use of his Divine Power in the Letter, to teach us, that as he was able to infuse Life into the Dead Body of Lazarus, so he could quicken any dead Soul he toucht, Joh. 11. 25. I am the Resurrection and the Life, he that believeth in me, tho' he were dead, yet shall he live: Tho' thou art fallen down from an upper Chamber Acts 20. 9. dead, yea, from the House-top in Adam, yet Christ can raise thee upon thy Feet, and set thee up believing: He hath Life to move thee, and Faith to make thee see the Marvels he worketh out for thee.

Art

Art thou dead, stark dead, that a little Life will *not* suffice to help thee? why, yet Christ came on purpose to bring thee enough of those *Vital Spirits* with him, *Joh. 10. 10.* latter part. *I am come that they might have Life, and (as if he had said, If Life be too little) that they might have it more abundantly.*

If thou art a poor Dead Soul that dost not yet know what to make of *Bread* and *Flesh*, yet thou mayst hear a good Word suited in the Mouth of Christ to thee, *Joh. 6. 51.* latter part. *And the Bread that I will give is my Flesh, which I will give for the Life of the World. The Bread that I will give is my Flesh.*] Alas ! if Christ had stopt there, it might not have suited to *thy* Case, or the Condition of some of *thine* ! peradventure, thou art weeping over some dead Soul by thee, either some poor *Relation* in thy *Bosom*, or some poor *Child* as a withered *Branch* sprung out of thy *Roots*, or a *Brother*, or a *Sister*, yet dead in *Trespases and sins* ; and thou mouneest over their *Graves*, alas ! my *Brother* ! alas ! *Sister* ! what is *Bread*, or where-

Eph. 2. 1.

Zech. 1. 13. the Place answers thee *with good words*

and

and comfortable, It is the Bread of Life, and living Flesh; (*the Bread that I will give is my Flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*) As if Christ had said, tho' they are dead, and cannot take it yet as Food, I will put such a Morsel into the Mouths of dead Men, as shall presently become Life, and afterwards yield Nourishment. Oh! how suitably doth this Gospel provide to help thee in thy poor dead State! tho' you are yet many of you Dead, Sinners, and can't as you are Dead take in Nourishment, or so much as come (by a spiritual Act of the Soul) where Nourishment is provided, yet the Gospel is prepared to come to You in power, and with the Holy Ghost, that Life may enter into your Carcasses, and the dayes of your Slaughter be accomplished, that you shall be like the slain that lye in the Grave, no more. Christ hath a Vertue to renew you, beyond all the Magicians of Egypt, and their Enchantments, that try to work Grace by Nature. "Moral Vertues, (as * one says) are but as so many sweet Flowers strow'd over a Dead Corps, which hide the loathsomness, but inspire not Life into it. Where-

1 Thes. 1. 5

Jer. 25. 34.

Psal. 88. 5.

Exod. 8.

19.

* Flavel,
Soul of
Man. p. 440

as

as there is a Quickning Touch in the Son of God that doth raise the Dead, and will enable you to *stand up from the Dead and live.*

Eph. 5. 14.

2. The Gospel hath Enlivening Provisions, suited to the Condition of Dead Souls, as they are fallen under a Dead *Frame*. Thou mayst have Life at the *Root*, and yet thy *Branch* may look as if 'twere dead in Winter ; or there may be a *Concoctive Faculty*, and an inward Power of Digestion thro' Grace, where thine *Appetite* to Food seems at present gone : The Gospel therefore hath Enlivening Provisions that suit thy Dead Frame : It hath *Spirits* to fetch thee, when thou art fallen into a dead *Swoon*. There's a Word to quicken thee, when thou art dead to *Duty*, tho' thou art not thro' Grace, wholly dead in *Sin* : For Dead *Frames* in the *New Man* are the Reliques of the *Old*, or the Reminders of thy Dead State before. Now the Gospel hath a Portion to quicken thee, a Preparation to whet thine *Appetite*, when thou seemest to be dull, and thy *Senses* are not as heretofore exercised ; see *Psal. 119. 50. This is my Comfort in mine Affliction, for thy Word*
hath

Heb. 5. 14.

hath quickned me : And v. 93. I will never forget thy Precepts, for with them thou hast quickned me : So that if thou art dropt asleep, or fallen into a dead Swoon, as a living Man may do, thou seest how he hath provided quickning Means to help thee, and excite thy Life again : Thou art not destitute of such a Help Meet, but it is gotten thee among the All things ready. Gen. 2.20.

If thy Sap be retired inwards, there's a Sun to cherish it, and call it forth into outward Vital Acts agen. If like Wax that hath melted, thou art Congeal'd, and hast contracted thy wonted hardness, there is a Fire in the Sanctuary to melt thee at the Presence of the Lord again : Yea, sometimes, tho' thou art even ready to question *the work that God maketh from the Beginning* upon thy Soul, *Eccl. 3.11.* and thou hast been *certain dayes Dead* in thy Stony Frame, or dry and withered, that thou thinkest it almost impossible for these *dry Bones to live*, yet there is a Quickning Virtue, an enlivening Power procur'd, and made ready for thee, and thou sometimes feel'st it suddenly at an instant. *The Spirit of Life from God that hath seemed for a time* *Ezek. 37.3* *Isa. 29. 5.*

to

Acts 10. 16 to be drawn back from thee (like Peter's sheet) up again into Heaven, yet is ready to come down and re-enter, as at the Resurrection of those slain Witnesses, after *the three Days and a half*, Rev. 11. 11. That's the first Case wherein Gospel-Provisions do *suit*, as well as are *made ready*. They are enlivening, either to raise from a *Dead State*, or to quicken under any *Dead Frame*.

2. Secondly, The Gospel hath *Enlightning Provisions*, suited to the Condition of *Blind Souls*. A Man may be a *living*, yet a *blind Creature* that cannot see his way. Nicodemus was so blind in *spirituals*, when Christ discoursed the matters of Salvation with him, that he could not discern the Mystery of the *New Birth*, but was fain to put that *Question* in the Ignorant Man's *Catechism*, *How can these things be?* It is but a blind Approach to Christ, if we come to him *only by the Hearing of the Ear*, and our

Joh. 3. 9. *Eyes have not seen him*. Thou must therefore cry out as that Blind Man did, when Christ askt him what he should

Job 42. 5. *do for him, Lord, that I may receive my sight*. The Gospel is not suited to thee as Blind, but as it hath an Influence upon

on that Film, to remove it, which clo-
seth up thy sight. There must be a
gracious and invisible Touch to open
Blind Eyes, as *certainly*, tho' not so mi-
raculously, as there was of Paul, when
immediately there fell from his Eyes, as it Acts 9.18.
had been Scales: God first struck him
Blind, and afterwards made him see his
Error.

Now the Gospel in its *Enlightning*
Provisions will exactly suit such a *Blind*
Case. Tho' thou hast liv'd in a State
of gross Darkness, without any Glimpse
of the * *true Light*, yet the Gospel is ap-
pointed and made ready to discover it: * *φως αληθινον*
This is plain in the Commission Paul
received to Preach it, Acts 26. 17, 18.
Delivering thee from the People, and from
the Gentiles, to whom now I send thee, to
open their Eyes, and to turn them from
darkness to light: As if God had said,
Come, Paul, I will send thee into a
spiritual *Egypt*, where the People are
groping in worse than *Egyptian Dark-*
ness, and I will send the Blessing of Go-
ssen with thee, that there shall be *Light* Exod.
in all their Dwellings. As in *Natural*
Vision the *Organ* must be opened and
clear'd, as well as the *Object* illumina-
ted,

Job

ted, and the *Medium* transparent, thro' which the Visual Rays do pass : So in the *Opticks of the Gospel*, God hath made a Provision for every one of *these* : His Spirit openeth the Eyes, enlighthneth the Object, (by shining upon Gospel-Truths) and (for a *Medium*) doth utter *Knowledge clearly*.

Luk. 1.67. Art thou Ignorant of *Salvation*? yet the Gospel is suited to give *Knowledge of Salvation*. Art thou lying spiritual-

v. 79.

ly in the dark, that thou knowest not what to make either of thy *Condition*, or of many needful *Truths* before thee?

yet the Gospel is provided to give light to them that sit in *darkness*. Art thou groping with that old Staff in thy Hand, of Nature, and trying by thy self how to find the way, but after all thine Attempts dost thou find thy self uneasy? well, still the Gospel is ready suited to

* *ibid.* ⁷⁸ guide our Feet in the way of peace : * To guide *strait*, as the word imports, that in the *Dark* we may not run into *Crooked Paths*, or turn any where aside. The Master of the House sets up a *Candle* in his Entry, that we may see, tho' by *Night*, to come in to the Feast he makes. Thou hast been already, per-
haps,

haps, under the means, and yet dost complain still of much Obscurity ; every new Tryal casts a kind of a mist before thine Eyes, and if thou seest any thing for thy Soul, it may be it is but as he did, *that looked up, and said, I see men, as Trees, walking :* But however, the Gospel provideth to work thine Eyesight better, tho' Pharisees (who object in scorn, *Are we blind also ?*) despise such *Clay and Spittle.* Tho' thro' Blindness thou hast wandered far about, yet the Gospel provideth to bring thee by a way, as *Josbua* saith unto the Israelites, *which ye have not passed heretofore ;* yea, as saith the Spirit by the Prophet, *Isa. 42. 16. I will bring the Blind by a way that they knew not, I will lead them in Paths that they have not known ; I will make darkness light before them.* That Promise indeed (as * a Judicious Interpreter observes) “ might literally and then more “ immediately refer to the Jew's Re- “ turn out of *Babylon*, who saw nothing “ of their approaching Deliverance, any “ more than Blind Men, and knew not “ which way to turn themselves : But nevertheless spiritually it was a Promise suited to these *Times of Refreshing*, which

Mark 8. 24

Joh. 8. 40.

Josh. 9. 4.

* Arthur Jackson, Vol. 4th. upon *Isai.*

L

are

- Act 3. 19. are come thus far from the Presence of
 the Lord already, as to enlighten Blind
 Eyes, and bring Man into the only way
 of Salvation, which he never saw be-
 fore. Tho' thou *stumblest in thy Walk*,
 for want of Light to guide thee, yet
 God's Word is prepared to be a *Lamp un-*
 to thy Feet, and a *Light unto thy Path*,
 Psal. 119. 105. as also the Entrance of
 thy words giveth light, it giveth under-
 standing to the simple. And his Testimo-
 nies are so suited, that they are sure,
 Psal. 19. 7. making wise the simple. Tho' thou art a
 Child of a very low Capacity, yet there
 Jam. 1. 17. be Beams of Knowledge from the Father
 of Lights will reach thee.

The Light of the glorious Gospel of
 Christ is made ready for thy need, to
 be a Light shining forth in Darknels.
 The Night it may be puzzles thee to
 find the way to thy Father's House, but
 God hath made ready something for thee,
 Psal. 139. to whom the Night shineth as the Day,
 12. and he prepares to shew thee both as
 to the Darknels and the Light what
 thou never sawst before. The Sun of
 Mal. 4. 2. Righteousness is ready to pierce thro' all
 the black and dismal Shades that cover
 thee, and tho' Darknels hath hid thy
 self

self as well as God from thee, yet the Lord will command his loving-kindness in the day-time, and find out what thou couldst not in the dark take Notice of thy self; for the darkness and the Light are both alike to Him. Psa. 42. 8.
Psa. 139. 12.

Thirdly, The Gospel hath Expiating Provisions, suited to the Condition of guilt and condemned Souls. Expiating, that is Reconciling, making Peace

for thee. * To reconcile is to piece up a Friendship that hath been broken off by some grand Miscarriage, and so to bring Enemies to their old Amity and Accord again. This is the state of the Case as it lyes between God and Man, from hence it cometh to pass, that tho' thou art guilty thro' the Offence of one, even

* *Reconciliare nihil aliud est quam amicitiam offensione aliquâ gravi diremptam resarcire, & sic inimicos in pristinam Concordiam reducere.* Davenant, *Exposit. ad Coloss. in versic.* 20. pag. 126.

the First Adam that involv'd thee, and guilty thro' thy own Personal Offence besides, yet here is this Provision for thee in the Gospel, that thou art to do with a God *not imputing Trespases*. This account the Scripture gives of it, that *when we were Enemies, we were reconciled* Rom. 5. 15.
2 Cor. 5. 19

* ἐχθροὶ
ὄντες κα-
τηλάλουν
αὐτοῦ.

to God by the Death of his Son, Rom. 5. 10. when we were Enemies, or, as the words are read, ** being Enemies*; the first Look of Kindness which Heaven cast upon us, beheld *Enmity* in our Hearts, and the *Weapons* of Rebellion in our Hands. Yet then were we reconciled by the Death of his Son, the Foundation of our actual Reconcilement was then laid, that the saving Application of the Death of Christ might be evidenc'd in our Effectual Calling. This the Apostle pursues further, 2 Cor. 5. 19. *To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the World unto himself, not imputing their Trespases unto them. Reconciling the World.*] The World is to be understood (as ** a great Divine* expounds it) *χρονικῶς*, for all Ages, all Times of the World, as he observes the same to be meant, 1 Joh. 2. 2. *Reconciling the World.*] Tho' the World be a World at Variance with God, and a World that lyes in wickedness, yet God will be so far reconciled unto this World, (where Gen. 6. 12. *All Flesh have Corrupted his way upon the Earth, as it is written, there is none Righteous, no nor one,*) that he will find out his chosen, and bring in *them* to Christ, that *they*

* Charnock.
Vol. 2d. p.
1187.

1 Joh. 5. 19

Gen. 6. 12.

Rom. 3. 10.

*they in Christ shall be reconciled also unto God. The Holy Ghost witnesseth to the same purpose in those words of Peter, **Elect**, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto Obedience and sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus Christ, Grace unto you, (you Elect) and **Peace** be multiplied:* So that when God comes to manifest that thou art one of these, by calling thee out from the World by a gracious and mighty Operation of his Spirit, he then *actually* reconciles Thee by the Atonement, and shews thou art one to whom this Blood of the Atonment belongs, *Rom. 5. 11. — by whom we have **Now** received the Atonement.* 1 Pct. 1. 2.

Now tho' thou art never so sensible of indwelling Enmity, convinced that thou art an Enemy by *Nature*, and hast manifested the Carriage of an Enemy a thousand times over, yet the Gospel provideth a Pacifying Reconcilement to make God and Thee Friends, *i. e. To make Reconciliation for Iniquity, Dan. 9. 24. Thou hast an High-Priest, in things pertaining to God, that remembered thy Name upon the List among those Few Names in Sardis, when he made Recon-* *Rev. 3. 4.*
 L 3 *ciliation*

ciliation for the sins of the People, Heb. 2. 19. This is most excellently and fully described Col. 1. 20. Having made Peace through the Blood of his Cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself. God was fallen out with the Creation for the Creature's sin, but he looks amicably again in Christ upon an apostate, revolted Creature, nothing is reconciled but by the Blood of his Cross only. Now tho' Guilt and Enmity, as considered absolutely in the Creature, may both tend to drive thee from God, yet while both are pursuing thee, they drive thee where thou meetest him that rejoiceth to procure thee a gracious Friendship, and bring thee back through the Atonement reconciled to God again.

Isa. 64. 5.

The Law of God condemns, but by Vertue of this Reconcilement in Christ it is God himself justifies, *Rom. 8. 33. It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is God.*] God hath a Prerogative of Grace upon the Mercy-seat to absolve a Trembling Criminal, as well as of Righteous Condemnation, when he sits upon a Throne of Justice, and when God pronounceth thine *Absolution*, the Sentence of Condem-

demnation will prove of no effect to
 hurt thee: There is none shall call thee
 to any just Account for *Life*, because
 thou hast one that now hath travest
Death. The *Council* of Heaven pleads
 to save thee, and a Black-mouth'd *Crew*
 in Hell, or foul-mouth'd *Crew* on Earth
 shall never make thy Cause, through
Accusation, now to go against thee.
 What unrighteous Plea shall ever over-
 rule, or *unjust Judge* stand up to over; Luk. 13.6.
 throw the *Highest Court of Justice*. He
 that justifieth, will turn every Letter
 of the *Law-Curse* to make up the *Gospel-*
Blessing. Tho' thou art *verily Guilty* in
 thy self, for *all the World is become Guil-* Rom. 3.19
ty before God: And tho' by *offending in*
one Point, we are *truely Guilty of all*, yet Jam. 2.10.
 tho' we are the *Sinners*, the Gospel comes
 in ready with the Son of God, who was 2 Cor. 5.21
made sin for us. Tho' we owe our
 very Lives unto the *second death*, the Rev. 20.13.
 Gospel hath procur'd the *Free Gift* to 21.4.
 save them, that our Statute of Death
 unto *Condemnation* might be *Repealed*
 and *Enacted unto Justification of Life*. Rom. 5.18.
 He that *passeth by* and sees thee in thy
Blood, delivers thee from *Blood guiltiness*;
 he takes thee up, and imputes not thy

* *Felo de se*
is the term
which our
Engl. Law
gives a self-
murderer.

Trespas, tho' a poor * *Felo de se*, that
hast sadly destroy'd thy self, *Hos. 13.9.*
O Israel! thou hast destroyed thy self, but
in me is thy Help found.

4.

Fourthly, The Gospel hath Healing
Provisions, suited to the Condition of back si-
ding, sick and wounded Souls. The Gospel
provides something *Medicinal* to purge
out Corruption, and *Restoratives* to
fetch the Patient again, and gracious
Lenitives to mollifie a Bleeding Wound,
and a *Skilfull Hand* to bind up and make
all whole again, as well as provides *Ali-*
ment and Food to Nourish. Alas! our
very Corruptions, if we had not Grace
provided to remove them, would spoil
all our Feast. We have such *Foul Sto-*
machs by Nature, that we need a *Pill*
to cleanse them, before our Morsel en-
ters. We have all Naturally great
Plagues and *fore Sickneses* that turn our
Stomach upon a *Feast of Fat things*:
And 'till we find something in the Go-
spel among its *All Things* to Cure us,
our Soul will be like that sick Man's in
Job, whose Life abhorreth Bread, and his
Soul dainty Meat: We shall otherwise be
too bad to touch Meat, or receive the
daintiest that can be brought us. The

Deut. 28.
59.

Job 33.20
Psal. 107.
18.

Cor-

Corruption of the Heart before it is in any measure purged, makes a Sinner disdain the Gospel, and hate the Diet of the Soul, like the *Israelites* that loathed Mannah, and call'd it *light Bread*, and said, *there is nothing at all besides this Mannah before our Eyes.* This is the true Natural State of a Man, before the Gospel hath been as *Physick* to work with healing Grace upon him. Num. 21. 5.
chap. 11. 6.

Now therefore the Gospel among its *All Things ready* hath its Provisions of *Medicine*, as well as *Meat* : The Grace of it will heal and nourish both, it can furnish the *Patient*, and supply the *Guest* ; create a soundness of Constitution by Due *Preparatives*, and keep it up with Provisions and Supplies in other kinds after. The Gospel is like those yielding and plentiful Trees in *Ezekiel's Vision*, where the Fruit was for Meat, and the Leaf for Medicine, Ezek. 47. 12. lat. pt. The Balm of them was Healing, and would work a Recovery upon the *languishing*, as well as the Fruit Nourishing to supply the Hungry, and the Juice refreshing to allay a *thirsty Appetite* : So there is *Balm* Jer. 8. 22. in *Gilead* ; a *Physician* and a Feast there both : A *Physician* that doth bring it Mat. 9. 12. Health Jer. 33. 6.

Health and Cure. The Gospel purgeth out *Corruption*, as well as prepares our *Table*; it cleanseth our *Vessel*, and then pours the precious *Mannah* in. In a word, it is *Physick* first, and refreshing *Diet* after.

Now this Gospel suits with thy Condition; tho' thou hast been a *Backslider* in thy ways, and art now *sick and wound-*

Psal. 38. 5. ed. *Do thy Wounds stink? are they corrupt by reason of thy Foolishness?* and do the *streams* of Corruption make thine Heart *sick*? yet God hath a Healing Medicine to settle thee at thy Heart, and when broken, the Lord *makes thee whole*. This is most graciously illustrated *Hos.* 14. 4. *I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely*: This is a *Remedy* suits thy *sick Case*. *I will heal.*] * The word is *Metaphorical*, and shews the Efficacy of the Physician, that tho' there hath been a † *Complication* of Distempers in thy Defection, insomuch that now the *sense* of it hath wounded thee in thy Spirit, and the Disease hath bruis'd thee, yet thy *sickness* shall not be unto death, but for the glory of God in healing thee; for a *Bruised Reed* shall he not break, *Matth.* 12. 20. *Not Break.*] i. e.

מְרַפֵּא *
† *Iniquitates morbis, se medico, Christum medicinæ comparat. Ribet in Hoseam.*

Joh. 11. 4.

as the * word imports, he will not do ^{* *na'ad'et*} any thing against it, to hurt or handle with violence such a Feeble Slip; his Hand is gentle, he will touch the Bruise with Care, *least the Spirit should fail before him, and the Soul that he hath made.* Isa. 57.16.

Tho' you came as a Troop of Lazaruses, Luk.16.20 and were laid at his Gate full of Sores, tho' you are taken with divers Diseases, Mat. 4.24. some with one spiritual Infirmary, some with another, whatsoever Sickness, whatsoever Plague it be, yet he hath prepared to send his Word and heal you, Psal. 107.20.

Be thou sick, rent or torn, whom He hath put to Pain, yet run over the List of Hos. 6. 1. the All Things, and thou shalt not complain, *thou hast no healing Medicine.* Thy Jer.30.13. Disease indeed hath desperately broken out, and it may be now hath fetcht out many a Groan, a Sigh, and a Tear, to see thy own Plague: But while your Tears gush out, God hath provided to stop an Issue of Blood. That Sore of Mark 5.29 thine which hath ran in the Night, and Psal. 77. 2. ceased not, shall not break out, *'till there be no Remedy,* because there is a Physician by whose Stripes ye are healed, 1 Pet. 2. 24. Nay, after thy deadly Wound is Rev. 13. healed, thou may'st carry some Marks 3. 12. of

* *Nisbet* of an Old Sore upon thee, but no * *Ske*
 upon *Peter*. in thy Wound can hurt thee, when thou
Joh. 20:25 hast also the *Print* of his Nails.

5. *Fifthly*, The Gospel hath *Releasing Pro-*
visions to free thee, if a *spiritual* Captive,
 and break thy Chains off. When the

Mat. 26:51 Gospel maketh a Feast, it lets us out
 of *Prison*, that we may follow the Ban-

quet into our great *High-Priest's Palace*.
 The Grace of the Gospel takes off our
Restraints, as well as takes up a Holy
Repast for us: It easeth us of a Yoke,

Psa. 119:45 as well as spreads our *Table*. Grace en-
 ables us to walk at *Liberty*, before we
 can leave work to earn the *Wages* of
Death, and sit down to Meat. We read
 of a Feast, *Matth. 27. 15.* at which the

Governour was wont to release a Prisoner:
 The Jews having † probably learnt it
 from the *Roman* Custom: However,

† *Credibile*
est, a Ro-
manis hoc
esse, Poli
Synop. Crit.
 * *Dickson*
 upon *Mat-*
thew.

this as * some account it, might be an
unwarrantable Practice, yet it is a *graci-*

ous Priviledge at this Feast of the Go-
 spel to release a Prisoner, ay, and a *No-*
table Prisoner too, *Mankind*, as notable
 in the *Species*, as ever *Barabbas*, the *Indi-*
vidual, was. The Gospel which Preach-
 eth up a Feast, proclaims a Free Liber-
 ty to Captives, *Isa. 61. 1.* The Spirit of

the

he Lord God is upon me, because the Lord
 hath anointed me to Preach good Tidings
 unto the meek, he hath sent me — to pro-
 claim Liberty to the Captives, and the open-
 ing of the Prison to them that are bound.
 Christ came to free the Servant of Cor-
 ruption, and a Slave of the Devil, that
 being loosed out of Bondage, the poor
 Soul might afterwards stand fast in the Gal. 5. 1.
 Liberty wherewith Christ hath made him
 free: For a Plain Text asserts the Secu-
 rity of such a Freedom, Joh. 8. 36. If
 the Son therefore shall make you free, ye
 shall be free indeed. 'Tis called expressly
 a Redemption, Col. 1. 14. it being the
 Release of Prisoners and Captives by the
 Payment of a Price, at such a Rate as
 the Son of God paid for the Redempti-
 on of them through his Blood. Now,
 suppose thou art yet in Bondage to Sin, Heb. 12. 1.
 the sin that doth so easily beset thee, the Rom. 7.
 sin that dwelleth in thee, yet the Gospel v. 17, 20.
 provideth against the intanglement, that
 thou may'st be made free from sin; i. e. Rom. 6. 18.
 Free from the Lordly Dominion of sin
 by the Spirit of Christ, and free from
 the severe Condemnation of sin by the
 Blood of Christ, according to the Atone-
 ment. Suppose a Slave, that thou art
 ty'd

ty'd to Satan's *Galley's*, and one whom Satan hath bound, *lo!* these *eighteen*, or *twenty*, or perhaps *forty Years*, yet the same Gospel that provideth to turn thee from Darknes to Light, is ready also

Act. 26. 18. to turn thee *from the Power of Satan unto God*. Art thou bound with a Chain that cuts thee, and imprints its ragged Indentures on thee, whilst thou art sensibly feeling of thy self to be straked down, as if something had fastened thee with Bands to Unbelief? yet the Gospel is made ready to come in with Faith, and more Evidences of Might in the Day of Christ's Power, when unto

Phil. 1. 29. *you it is given on the behalf of Christ to believe on him*. Tho' thou canst not believe, except it be given thee from above, and thine Impotence makes thy Bondage, yet the Gospel provides to release thee from the *Bondage of Corruption*, and translate thee into the *Liberty*

Rom. 8. 21. *of the Children of God*.

Now therefore if *Bound*, what can suit thee more than the *Loosning Power* of the Gospel? if thou lack'st to be

Gal. 5. 13. *called unto Liberty*, nothing can be fitter for thy Case than the Gospel that proclaims it, and a God that procures it

for thee. No Power under Heaven can reach thy Case so fitly, while of a *truth* thou art *Bound*, as the Son of God that can make thee *Free indeed*. The Gospel is suited to thy Condition, tho' thou art shut up in Prison; thou may'st be a *Prisoner of Hope*, tho' thou feelest the weight of thy *Chain*, and art laid in *Affliction and Iron*. The *Day* of the Gospel is a *Year* of Jubilee, a great Year of Release, and called the *Acceptable Year of the Lord*, in which he accepts of a Ransom for thee. Tho' thou hast been barbarously us'd in *Egypt*, he hath set open a *Door of Hope*, thro' which thou may'st see, and a *Door of Entrance* thro' which he will *bring* thee in *Free* to *Canaan*. The Gospel hath Grace ready to *set thee at Liberty*, and then to keep thee for ever Free from the Tyranny and Dominion of thine old Jailors, that thou may'st *always dwell in safety*. This is provided suitably to thy Case among the *All things ready*.

Zech. 9. 12

Psal. 107.
10.

Isa. 61. 2.

Hof. 2. 15.

Psal. 4. 8.

Sixthly, The Gospel hath *Apparelling Provisions*, suited to array the *Naked*, and adorn *Nasty Souls*. 6.

1. It hath *Provisions suited to our spiritual Nakedness*, to cloath and cover it.

The

- The Gospel hath a *Wardrobe* of the richest Wear, as well as a *Table* of the choicest Viands. Christ in *the Day of his Espousals* cloaths the *Naked*, as well as feeds the *Hungry*. We read of the Marriage-Feast of *Samson*, that when he had put forth a *Riddle* unto the *Philistines*, he promised to give them *thirty Sheets*, and
- Judg. 14. 12. *thirty Change of Garments, if they could certainly declare it to him within the seven dayes of the Feast*, which *Samson* afterwards upon their telling it, gave them in full Tale (as He had agreed) punctually. Now the Gospel-Feast at the Marriage of the King's Son, affords to us *Changes of Raiment likewise*, (tho' not upon such hard Conditions as *Samson* made with the *Philistines*, for when we have
- 1 Tim. 6. 8. *Food and Raiment in the Gospel, he frankly gives us Both.*) Tho' we are stript in the *First Adam*, yet we may be cloathed with the *Second*. Hence it is the Scripture speaks of *putting on Christ, Rom. 13. 14. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ* — Tho' we want *Cloaths* in a Righteousness of our own, yet we may *put on the Lord Jesus*, that
- Rev. 3. 18. *the shame of our Nakedness* do not appear. God hath provided Christ there-fore

fore accordingly to suit us, as

* **Jehovah, or the Lord our Righteousness:** if common Pro-

* וְיְהוָה צְדִיקָנוּ *

Jer. 23. 6.

vidence hath provided a Suit which the very Grass of the Field and the Flowers of it wear, *Special Grace* would not come behind, but provide the Righteousness of God, in the Garments of Salvation, to Cloath you. *Oh ye of little Faith!* tho' you come *Naked into the World*, yet *He* hath provided that you may *carry this Cloathing out*. Mat. 6 30.
Job 1. 21.

2. It hath Provisions suited to our *spiritual Nastiness*, to adorn us, and put the *Garments of Praise upon us*. This Raiment indeed is for Sinners that come Nasty, but not for such as are resolved to *continue* so. Alas! we come in to the Feast of our selves, like the *Poor Man in vile Raiment*, but the Bounty of the Feast-maker provides us with a *better Suit* to appear at his Table, and before his Presence in. The Guests at this Feast are come off from the *Hedges* and the *High-ways*, in a mean, dirty, tatter'd Garb, and therefore had need of a clean Wedding-Garment to sit down in. Jam. 2. 2.
Mat. 22. 10
Luk. 14.
21, 23.

The Dirt and defilements that clave unto us do make God abhorr our Persons,

M

and

and loath our Performances, 'till he put
 Ezek. 16, of his Comeliness upon us.

14.

The High-Priest *Josua* was *cloathed*
 Zech. 3. 3. but yet with *Filthy Garments*,
 when he stood before the Angel, or before
 Mal. 3. 1. the Lord Jesus Christ, the Angel of the
 Covenant, who appears unto this High-
 Priest as the same Person that was to
 Heb. 3. 1. come in the Flesh, the Apostle and High-
 Priest of our Profession. Now this Glo-
 rious Angel, this bright *Seraphim* be-
 holding the Righteousness of *Josua* as
 an Eye-sore in the Pure sight of God,
 commands it to be taken away: He
 answered and spake unto those that stood
 before him, v. 4. saying, take away the
Filthy Garments from him: These Filthy
 Garments could not be meant properly
 of his *Iniquities*, because Sin is such an
 Abomination in the *Abstract*, that when
 Men begin to entertain the true Senti-
 ments of Religion, they dare not put
 on their *Sins* for a Covering, but yet are
 very prone to wrap up themselves in
 warm Thoughts with their own *Servic-
 es*, even as Men, who tho' they do not
 use to array themselves with *Dirt*, may
 put on *Dirty Garments*. I therefore un-
 derstand by these *Filthy Garments*, which
 the

the Angel commands to be taken away, all *Workings* whatsoever in the great Business of our *Justification*, because of the immediate Impurity convey'd by the *Worker*, that must make them (absolutely consider'd) to be an *Abomination* Luk. 15. 13 in the sight of God: For who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one, Job 14. 4. Man himself is polluted, and so are all his *Duties*: Now upon this Account in that Type of *Josbua* the Angel proceeds, after the Removal of those Filthy Garments: And unto him (unto Zech. 3. 4. *Josbua*) he said, behold I have caused thine Iniquity to pass from thee, (I have provided thee a Remedy against thy impure Services, and therefore much more against thine Impurities or sins) and I will cloath thee with change of Raiment. I confess * some Expositors do make * Pemble. this Change of Raiment to be the *Robe of Sanctification*: But † others do Interpret it (I think in the most natural and genuine sence) of the *Robe of Christ's Righteousness*, because his Righteousness being without us, is more aptly compared to Raiment worn upon us; not but tho' it was principally intended to signify our Pardon and Justification by

1 Cor. 1. 30

2 Cor. 5. 21

Joh. 4. 5.

Christ's Righteousness, it supposeth also our *Sanctification* to be ever accompanied herewith ; for Christ is made of God unto us *Sanctification* and *Redemption*, wherever he is made *Righteousness*: He answers our Pollution by a Work of his Spirit *in* us, (of which afterwards) as well as our Guilt by his Righteousness, for the sake whereof God passeth an Act of his Grace *on* us. We may therefore look upon this Expression of *the Change of Raiment*, to shadow out Christ's *Righteousness* for Pardon and Justification, and yet that Holiness of Heart and Life must *ascertain* unto Us the Efficacious Interest we have in such a Righteousness to change our *State*, and so *evidence* it to be no Dream and Delusion. Alas ! when we come to partake of the Priviledges of the Gospel in our own Righteousness, we do not only come like the *Gibeonites* with *old Garments clouted, and rent upon us*, but we are all as an *unclean thing*, with *unclean and filthy Raggs* about us, as our Righteousnesses are expressly termed by the Holy Ghost, *Isa. 64. 6.* Our *Plague sores* issue out and defile all our *Service*, that we have not a *Rag* fit to put on.

Now

Now the Gospel among its *All things* ready, provides us the goodly Raiment of Gen. 27. 15 our Elder Brother, and takes Care that we be found in *Christ's* Righteousness, when we are plac'd at God's Table : Hence it is *Psal.* 45. 13. that the *King's Daughter* is all glorious within, her *Cloathing* is of wrought Gold. Christ in her, and Christ upon her, his Spirit inhabiting, his Righteousness adorning, makes her truly Noble : And this Honour have all his Saints, that never a Pharisee in the World with the Long Robes of a Self-Righteousness is arrayed like one of these. Christ hath gotten thee Raiment that is Ornamental, as well as Covering, for tho' it be a *Vesture* dipped in Blood, yet it doth not stain thy Raiment. Tho' he was red in his Apparel when he trod the Wine-press, because the Sprinklings of his Blood dyed his own wear, yet it was made so *White* in the Blood of the Lamb, that ever since it hath been to the Saints a Suit of Fine Linnen. Alas ! it would not match your spiritual Vileness, if a Prince should cloath you in Scarlet, as Saul did the Daughters of Israel, and put on Ornaments of Gold upon your Apparel. But

Psal. 149. 9

Luk 20. 46

Rev. 19. 13

Isa. 63. 2, 3.

Rev. 19. 8.

v. 14.

2 Sam. 1.

24.

the Prince of the Kings of the Earth brings forth the *Best Robe*, *Luke. 15. 22.* to Cloath you gorgeously, infinitely beyond the Attire of all such as are cloathed with *strange Apparel*. That is the Sixth Case, in which the Provisions of the Gospel suit.

Zeph. 1. 8.

7. *Seventhly*, The Gospel hath *Sanctifying Provisions* suited to the Universal Defilements of Spirit, Soul and Body. The Gospel requires *Holy Vessels*, when it makes ready *Holy Victuals*. As thou art *Filthy*, it opens a *Fountain* to wash in, *Zech. 13. 1.* In that day there shall be a *Fountain* opened to the *House of David*, and to the *Inhabitants of Jerusalem*, for *sin*, and for *unclean-ness*: It is true, "The more full Accomplishment (as * one observes.) of these things were reserved for the Converted *Israelites*, and therefore are peculiarly promised in that Day when they shall repent and be restored, yet are the common Priviledge of the Gospel-Church in every Age. Thus far *He*. It is a clear Promise of Sanctification fulfilled in the Cleansing Virtue and Efficacy of Christ's Blood under the Gospel: That Fountain opened is

* *Hutchinson*
son upon
the Minor
Prophets.

(as

(as * one calls it) the true *Siloam*, which purifies and cleanseth every Leper whom God puts into it; and as the same Author observes, tho' the Spouse is to Christ a *Fountain Sealed*, yet Christ is to Sinners a *Fountain opened*. For the *House of Judah, and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem.*] i. e. for every one that is made to look out to Christ, it is opened for every one that sees the Necessity of Holiness or Purification from it: These shall be all Purified in that Bath which is prepared to *cleanse us from all Filthiness and Pollution both of Flesh and Spirit*. The Generation of God's Children are not left to be like that other Generation which is not washed from their Filthiness: But God hath provided that they may be *Partakers of his Holiness*, Heb. 12. 10. last words. The Gospel will cleanse thee of thy Spot, which otherwise tho' thou wash thee with Nitre, and rake thee with Soap, would remain a Spot still, with *mine Iniquity marked before me*, saith the Lord God, Jer. 2. 22. The Gospel brings thee a Laver full of Christ's Blood, and this is the Blood that rinseth all clean, 1 Job. 1. 7. last words. *And the Blood of Jesus Christ his*

* Mr. Hurst,
Supplement to
Pool's Eng.
Annotations.
Song 4. 12.

2 Cor. 7. 1.

Prov. 30. 12.

Son cleanseth us from all sin. Nitre and Soap, either apart or mingled, are searching Ingredients (you would think) to cleanse a Dirty Spot! but alas! tho'

- Eccl. 7. 29. Man seeks out many Inventions, to try to wash himself clean, yet it will not
 Jude v. 23. do for a Garment spotted with the Flesh, if God search this out; nothing will fetch
 2 Kings 5. out Sin 'till we dip in Jordan, nay, not
 14. only wash in Water, but with our
 Psal. 44. 21 Garments roll'd in Blood, i. e. the Blood
 Isa. 9. 5. of Christ, who came by Water and by
 1 Joh. 5. 6. Blood, for our Spot to fetch it out
 Rev. 1. 5. clean, being said to have loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own Blood.
 The Gospel provideth suitably to our
 Heb. 9. 13. Pollution, for it sanctifieth to the Purifying of the Flesh, 'till we are made
 meet for Communion with the God of
 Numb. 16. the Spirits of all Flesh, even sanctified in
 22. Christ Jesus, 1 Cor. 1. 2.

8. Eighthly, The Gospel hath Rich Provisions for the Poor Saints, tho' never so impoverisht, lowly in Mind, or Poor in Spirit. The Gospel abounds with the Liberality of the Grace of God, to supply the Poverty and Wants of all Men in Christ. Tho' thy Transgressions have beset thee, and the Iniquity of thy Heels have

have compass'd thee about, that thou art now like the Man in his way to *Jericho*, that fell among *Thieves*; yea, *Luk. 10. 30* thou may'st cry out with *Micah* of the *Danite's Plunder*, They have taken away (tho' not my *Gods*, to Complain *Judg. 18. 24.* just like him, yet) the *Image* of my *God*, mine Original Perfection, as I was made once like him, my Knowledge, Righteousness, and true Holiness, and what have I more? Well, be it thus, here is enough left thee still to be a poor, broken Petitioner at the Throne of Grace, crying out for a New Stock to set up with *Christ*, in whom are hid all the *Treasures* that will make thee *Rich* again. *Col. 2. 3.* Art thou *Poor*? thou may'st be *Rich* towards *God*. *Luk. 22. 28* When thou art got to the Gospel, thou art got to *God's Treasury*, which he unlocks, to make known what is the *Riches of the Glory of this Mystery among the Gentiles*, *Col. 1. 27.*

Ninthly, The Gospel hath Full Provisions, suited to the Condition of empty Sinners. There be Lengths and Breadths in the Love of *God*, that will give thee full measure, pressed down and running over. *Luk. 6. 38.* Thou art empty in thy self, and till He refresh thee with his Loving-Kindness,

Prov. 7. 18. Kindness, thou canst not take thy *Fill of Love*. Hast thou ever met with the *Emptiers*, that *have emptied thee out*? Nah. 2. 2. The Gospel hath Provisions to come in and *fill up* all that empty space again. Tho' at home thou art like her that *is empty, and void, and wast*, Nah. 2. 10. as *Nineveh* that was once full of Men, Counsel, Treasures, yet afterwards emptied out of all, so thou hadst once the sensible Manifestations of one that lodg'd in thy House to fill thee, but now at *home empty*; and also tho' *abroad*, like *Naomi*, thou hast gone out upon some Ocasions full, if thou hast gone to an Ordinance, thou hast it may be sometimes carried much of the Presence of Jesus Christ with thee, yet the *Lord* (to try thee) *hath brought thee home again empty*, Ruth. 1. 21. yet still the Gospel hath Provisions suited to thee, that when most sensible of thine Emptiness, thou may'st receive thy *measure*, and not like proud careless Boasters, who presume on something when they have nothing, * *be sent empty away*. Thou hast to do with one that is *full of Grace and Truth*, and with one besides, *of whose Fulness thou mayst receive*, Joh. 1. 16. even

* Luk. 1. 53
Joh. 1. 14.
last words.

even one that will never leave thee empty, because he filleth all in all, Eph. 1. 23. let it be as low with thee in thy Beginning as a sense of Want can make it, yet thou shalt never take up the Complaint of Babylon in thy latter End, Jer. 51. 34. the Lord hath made me an empty Vessel.

Tenthly, The Gospel hath satisfying Provisions, suited to the Condition of Longing Souls, that hunger and thirst after Righteousness. Be thou as Dainty in thy Palate Heaven-wards as possible, yet in the Gospel thou hast a God who satisfieth thy Mouth with good things, Psal. 103. 5. He will not deny Dainties, or withhold Mannah, or keep back the Fruits that thy Soul lusteth after. Thou shalt not be estranged from thy Desire in the things of God, tho thou wouldst eat his Lambs out of the Flock, his Calves out of the midst of the Stall, and drink his Wine in Bowls. If six Days common Provision at home hath made thee long for Dainties, he hath appointed a Festival upon the Holy Sabbath, when thy Flesh longeth for the Courts of the Lord. This Longing of the Soul may be reduc'd unto Two Heads, Hungring and Thirsting, and the Gospel hath suitable Things for Both.

10.

Math. 5. 6.

Rev. 18. 14

Psal. 78. 30

Amos 6. 4.

v. 6.

Psal. 84. 2.

1. It

1. It hath Satisfying Provisions, *suit-
ed to Hungry Ones*, *Psal. 107. 9. For he
satisfyeth the Longing Soul, and filleth the
Hungry Soul with Goodness.* There is
many a Hungry Appetite hath been
brought into his Presence, and *be hath
filled the Hungry with good things*, *Luk.
1. 53.* Perhaps thou art one that hast
lost a Meal, thro' a Providential Hand
of God upon thee, and where God sets
out Food, thou comest the more Hun-
gering thither: Some Black Providence
may have put on Sackcloth upon thy
Soul, that thou hast *mourned and fasted
certain Dayes*, and lo! a Restraint of
the Bread of God whets thee further on:
Thou canst not forbear crying when
Prov. 30. 15. thou art Hunger-bitten, *like those Daugh-
ters of the Horse-leech, Give, Give;* I
have been thus long from an Ordinance
Psal. 109. 24. detain'd, and my *Flesh faileth of Fat-
ness*, I must break out to the Supper
now, I can stay no longer in. Well,
if it be thus, the Feast is still meet for
thee. Christ that Invites thee to sit
down, will Feast thee with his Love
1 Sam. 30. 12. 'till thy Spirit comes again.

2. It hath satisfying Provisions *suit-
ed to Thirsty Ones.* If thou long'st for some
Pleasant

Pleasant Draught, yet the Lord doth
 satisfie such a * *Longing Soul*, as some * *Animam*
 do Expound it of *Thirst*, Psal. 107. 9. *sitientem.*
 form. pt. before mentioned. Thy Thirst Moller.
 it may be is vehement, but that Ocean *Enarr. in*
 in God will suit it, where thou art bid *Psalms.*
 to *drink abundantly*, Cantic. 5. 1. last
 words. Seeing thou may'st come and
 drink, it will fare but the better with
 thee, when thy *Soul thirsteth for the*
Living God, Psal. 42. 2. If like *Samson*
 thou art ready to dye for *Thirst*, what Judg. 15. 18
 can be more suitable to thy Case, than
 for God to break up the *Fountains of the*
great Deep, 'till thou find an *Enhan-*
hope, the *Well* of him that *cried*, Judg.
 15. 19. In short, if God cleave a Hol-
 low in the Rock, and open Christ the
 true *Rock that follows us*, thou shalt then
 be suited, and then satisfied from the
 Clefts of it, much better than *Samson*
 from the *Hollow of the Jaw-bone*.

Eleventhly, The Gospel hath support-
 ing Provisions, and Provisions light and
 easie, suited to the Condition of Burdened
 and Oppressed Souls. 1. Supporting un-
 der Heavy Burdens. 2. Substituting
 Light and Easie in the room of Heavy
 ones.

1. The

1. The Gospel hath Provisions that are Supporting under Heavy Burdens. Are Afflictions heavy? Do they gall our tender Necks, or fret sadly inwards? yet where our own shoulders sink, the Gospel hath provided to *put the everlasting Arms underneath*, Deut. 33. 27. — *underneath are the everlasting Arms*. Thou canst not perish in Affliction, because in all thine Affliction he hath made Provision; indeed otherwise the Burden would be utterly insupportable, Psal. 119. 92. *Unless thy Law had been my Delights, I should then have perished in my Affliction*: I could not have stood under my Burden, if he had not stood by to lean on. The * *Renewal* of mine Afflictions, together with their *Encrease* must have otherwise overcome me: But now as the Case stands, when his *Hand presseth thee sore*, Psal. 38. 2. Yet *the Lord upholdeth thee with his Hand* (too,) Psal. 37. 24. when thou fallest into outward Calamities, he doth mitigate the Affliction, that it shall not overwhelm thee. A word of Power is prepar'd to *bear thee up in his Hands*, while leaning Melancholly upon thine own, thou art bowed down heavily. Suppose thou

touchest

* *Redeunt dolores & redeundo crescunt, at tandem opprimunt.*
Rivet in
Psa. 119.
v. 92. Vol.
2. pag. 461.
Col. 2.

touchest the Bier, thou art next akin to Luk. 7.14.
 one that is carried to his long home, yet Eccl. 12.5.
 God hath made something ready to support thee, while thou art chief with the
 Mourners that go about the streets. He
 that is better to thee than ten Sons, as
 Elkanah hath it when he Comforts Hannah, 1 Sam. 1.8.
 yea, the chiefest of ten thousand, is Cant. 5.10
 better to thee than so many Relations,
 were they possible, in any kind whatever.
 The Gospel hath such supporting Provisions,
 as will keep thee at the very Grave's mouth from sinking, where
 others slide in.

2. The Gospel hath Provisions that
 substitute a Light and an Easie Burden in
 the Room of Heavy ones. If thou hast
 a Burden upon thy Back, a Burden upon
 thine Hands, yea, one upon thine
 Head, and a heavier Load at Heart,
 yet the Gospel is ready to exchange
 them, and afford thee so light a Yoke,
 thou needst not call a Burden: If thou
 dost, yet still with Christ thou mayst
 say, it is a Burden is not heavy, My Yoke
 is easie, and my Burden light, Matth. 11.
 30. Christ doth not leave his People
 to do all in their own Natural Strength,
 it is the Covenant of Works that serves the
 the

- the *Worker* so; Christ makes it easie to hold his Yoke, because his Hand *lightens* it, while his Hand *holds* it on
- Isa. 30. 20. *us.* Tho' thou hast eaten the Bread of Affliction that lyes heavy at thy Heart, yet he hath prepared thee a Table of Bread to digest easier, while he appoints
- Joh. 4. 34. it thy Meat and Drink to do the Will of God; *her ways are ways of pleasantness,* Prov. 3. 17. For tho' it be hard in it self to bear the very Gospel Yoke, yet it is *not* hard, when thou hast strength
- Psal. 78. 39 to bear of him. He remembers that we are *Flesh*, and therefore provides his Spirit to be *willing*, when our *Flesh* is *weak*. Christ is a Master that will not deal like others. Sin was imperious, Satan cruel, other *Lords* that have had Dominion worse than *Hagar's Mistress*, *Sarai*, that dealt hardly with her, Gen. 16. 6. but Grace is order'd to deal with Thee gently, as *David* charg'd his Captains
- 2 Sam. 18. 5. to deal gently with the young Man Absalom.

12. Twelfthly, The Gospel hath *Establishing Provisions*, suited to the Condition of *wavering and unsteady minds*. Art thou like a *Wave* of the Sea, that is driven up and down, and tost, yet the Gospel hath

Jam. 1. 6.

a Rock, not to break or wrack, but settle thee, whereon thy Soul may rest. It provides the *Author* of thine Establishment, God himself, 2 Cor. 1. 21. *Now he which establisheth us is God:* It provides the *means* of thine Establishment, the Grace of God, the sure Doctrine of Grace, that thou mayst know what to believe, and what to Practise, instead of the *Craft and Sleight of Cunning-men.* Heb. 13. 9. *It is a good thing that the Heart be established with Grace, not with Meats;* as if he had said, The *Substance* of the Gospel will, but the *shadows* of the Law will not afford an establishment Posture for you. The Gospel suits unto the settling of the *whole*, or of any *part* that needs it. Do you want *Footing*? it hath laid the *Path-way* to Heaven, and cut it out upon the *Rock* the tried way thither. Would you *Catch*, and meet with sure *Hand-hold*? it provides you that which is fit to fasten on, that you may *lay hold upon Eternal Life.* It hath Establishment for *giddy Heads*, and enough for any *gracious Hearts.* It will keep you *steddy* in the *Centre*, that you shall not like others in the *Circle* turn always *round.* Briefly, it hath all that

Eph. 4. 14.

1 Tim. 6. 12

N

can

can be suited to *perfect, stablish, settle you*, 1 Pet. 5. 10. last words. The *Elegant variety* of the words may denote the highest *Degree* of stedfastness, an establishment that can never be overthrown. The last words, ** settle you*, seems to have a reference to the security of the *Root*, and shews that Grace is of a *settling* Nature unto all that have *the Root of the matter in them*. Grace *without* will find out the smallest measure of it *within*, to secure and fix the Subject, that it shall not be moved

* *Fundare, est Radicem ipsam gratia magis magisque infigere.*

Ames in Pet.

Job 19.28

Colos. 1.23 *away from the Hope of the Gospel.*

13.

Thirteenthly, The Gospel hath strengthening Provisions, suited to the Condition of weak Souls. Tho' thou hast lost some of the Power which was given thee from above ; i. e. tho' the exercise and actings of Grace be low, yet the Gospel hath got ready to encrease Grace, and strengthen its Principle within thee, when thou canst not of thy self strengthen the things which remain that are ready to dye, Rev. 3.2. tho' thou art, as to spirituals, sadly pin'd away, yet God hath provided such a Hearty Meal for thee, that yet again out of weakness thou may'st be made strong. Tho' thou art so weak

Heb. 11.34

of

of both Hands, thou canst not keep thy hold, he hath got such a Feast to put thee into Heart, as will make thee thou shalt not *let it go*. Tho' thy *New Creature* be yet so weak, it will only *lye in Arms*, yet thy *nursing Father* is ready to open its Mouth to speak; for *out of the mouths of Babes and Sucklings hast thou ordained strength*: He opens the Lips, He loosens the Tongue of the spiritually sucking Infant, that the New born Babe in Christ shall give the Glory due unto his Name, and say, *Thô I a Little Child am weak, yet Oh my Father, who is a strong Lord like unto thee!*

Psal. 8. 2.

Psal. 29. 2.

Psal. 89. 8.

Fourteenthly, The Gospel hath succouring Provisions, suited to the Condition of Tempted Souls. The Devil may suggest a Defect in Gospel-Grace, as if there were nothing that did suit among the *All things* with thee, but in this very Case of his Assaults, it hath succours, and brings the *Anchor of the Soul* to throw out, while Satan makes the Storm. Tho' he hath deluded and bewitched with his Sorceries, thou may'st bid him stand now with thine Enchantments, and with the multitude of thy Sorceries, wherein thou hast laboured from thy Youth, if so be thou shalt be able to profit, if so be thou may'st

14.

Heb. 6. 19

Acts 8. 11.

Isa. 47. 12.

prevail: (to allude to that Challenge of the Holy Ghost made to the *Babylonian* Confidence of old.) Make ready thy Snares and *Devices*, of which we
 2 Cor. 2. 11 are not ignorant, put forth thy Hand, and
 Job 2. 5. now do thy worst; here is *that* in the Gospel, *Satan*, which will put thee to everlasting Silence, tho' thy Name be *Legion*, and thou hast many with thee, here
 Mark 5. 9. be *All Things against* thee. The God of Truth hath prepared to rebuke thy Lyes, and the God of Peace to tread thee under Foot; the God of Power will tie up thine Hands and stop thy Breath, and strike thro' the *Leviathan* that hath troubled the Holy Waters, even *Leviathan that piercing and crooked Serpent*,
 Psal. 27. 1. and will wound the Head of the Dragon (of this presumptuous and accursed Dragon) in the Waters. The Provisions of the Gospel are succouring; it will relieve thee to meet with a Gospel that makes a greater opposition to Satan, than Satan can to Thee; to meet with a Gospel that lays open the Care in the Heart of Christ for thee, to appear and withstand him while he winnows, Luk. 22. 31. And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat *. To sift you.] The Devil

* *Te ovid-*
out, signi-
 fies to
 shake, or
 stir vio-
 lently up
 and down.

vil would shake the Corruptions in the Heart together, that Grace should be invisible, and all buried in them; but Christ's Intercession is a security to these Graces, and keeps them he shall not sift or jogg them out of their Place.

There is a *Good Spirit* in the Gospel provided against the *Evil* one, either to drive him *from*, or to deal with him *on us*. Tho' thro' Satan's continual Injections and Suggestions *thou art grievously vexed with a Devil*, yet the *Angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them*, Psal.

34. 7. Art thou assaulted by *the strong man armed*? yet the Gospel brings a *stronger than He* into the Field, that looks always well to thee, and will not suffer the Devil to be too long upon thee, or *Principalities and Powers to wrestle* too much against thee. Eph. 6. 12.

Art thou Con- versant in some Plat he hath beset about with Wiles? yet here is the Wisdom of the **Seed** to supplant and counter- work the subtilty of the Serpent, *that thou mayst stand against the Wiles of the Devil*, Eph. 6. 11. In the Gospel, the Lord taketh Care that *there hath no Temptation taken you, but such as is com-*

mon to Man; and God is Faithful, who will not suffer You to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the Temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it, 1 Cor. 10. 13. God shews you in the Gospel, that he intends no Temptation but what he will thro' his succouring Help make you fit to bear; be they what Tryals (suppose) or incitements to Sin they will, either God tries, or Satan tempts, or our own Lusts entice, they are but slight matters, and never rise above the common measure: God doth not suffer you to be over-rated, he doth not exact, nor will he allow to be exacted more on

Eph. 6. 16. you than others. If Satan winnow you, God will order it to blow away your Chaff: If he throws his Fiery Darts upon you, God will have it consume no more than burn up your Dross. Tho'

Jam. 1. 2. ye fall into divers Temptations, yet the Gospel provides a Saviour that hath suffered being tempted, who is able to succour them that are tempted, Heb. 2. 18.

Tho' the Devil haunts thee with Despair, or casts in Black and Blasphemous Thoughts upon thee, yet the God of Peace shall braise Satan under thy Feet shortly,

shortly, Rom. 16. 20. *The God of Peace.*]
 Tho' the Devil comes in with *War*, and
 may suggest God an Enemy, yet there
 is *Peace* from God towards thee: Tho'
 your Adversary the Devil be that Roar- 1 Pet. 5. 8.
 ing Lyon which goeth up and down, seek-
 ing whom he may devour, yet thou shalt
 tread upon the Lyon and Adder, (that old
 crooked Serpent that hath so often Poy-
 soned, or tormented thee with his Sting)
 the young Lyon and the Dragon shalt thou
 trample under Feet, Psal. 91. 13. Tho' a
 Messenger of Satan buffet thee, the Lord 2 Cor. 12. 7
 knoweth how to deliver the godly out of
 Temptations, 2 Pet. 2. 9. Tho' the De-
 vil should cast some of you into Prison, yet
 the Gospel hath Provisions still to suc-
 cour you, even where Satan's seat is. Rev. 2. 13.
 The Captain of our Salvation will pro- Heb. 2. 10.
 tect you against the Prince of Devils. Mat. 9. 34.
 Here is not only a Shield and a * Hel- ch. 12. 34.
 met of Salvation, but the whole Armour * Eph. 6.
 of God to secure you against all his Fie- 17.
 ry Darts, and His Grace sufficient when Eph. 6. 11.
 you are tempted of the Devil. 2 Cor. 12. 9
 In a Matth. 4. 1.
 word, there is all; and when he goes
 about to cause thine Heart to despair, he Eccl. 2. 20.
 shall never discover it of this Gospel, that
 it is not entire, wanting nothing. Jam. 1. 4.

15. *Fifteenthly, The Gospel hath Cordial Provisions, suited to the Condition of Faint-*

Judg. 19. 5 *ing Spirits. Thou may'st comfort thine Heart with a Morsel, when thou hast*

Job 6. 7 *eaten other sorrowful Meat, or with a Cordial to fetch thine Heart again, that*

Psal. 126. 2 *will even fill thy Mouth with Laughter,*

Psal. 102. 9 *after thou hast mingled thy Drink with*

Psal. 13. 2 *weeping : Tho' thou hast sorrow in thine Heart daily, and art shook with continu-*

al Feebleness of Mind, yet He that made thee, can speak a word that shall make thee be of good chear, thou shalt eat thy meat with Gladness, when He hath join'd and created singleness of Heart, Acts 2.

41. *In the Gospel he hath it ready for thee ; Tho' thou a Poor Creature faintest, yet hast thou not known ? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the Ends of the Earth, fainteth not ? Isa. 40. 28. He doth not flag*

in his Power, thô an Arm of Flesh hangs dangling from the Bone, by a little skin that holds it. It may keep thine Heart

up, to think that neither the Hand, or the Heart of God is ever cast down.

The Ministry of the Gospel is to be a Cordial, to keep thine Heart, and cheer up thy Spirits : see 2 Cor. 4. 1. Therefore

seeing

seeing we have this Ministry, as we have received Mercy, we faint not : and v. 16. for which cause we faint not. It is a Cordial that warms, when thou hast suckt in other Spirits, and *gat no Heat* by them. 1 King. 1. 1

Sixteenthly, The Gospel hath *Quieting Provisions, suited to the Condition of Troubled Minds.* It hath a *Sun of Righteousness* to shine after God's Face hath been long hid : If *miserable Comforters* Job. 16. 2.

disturb, here is a *merciful Creator* quiets thee. When other Comforters are *Physicians of no value*, too weak and unskilful to remove or repel the *Disease* that troubles thee, the *Gospel* is afforded, that we might have effectual *Remedy* ; or, as the Holy Ghost by the Apostle, *that we might have a strong Consolation*, Heb. 6. 18.

That is, as * a Learned Man glosseth * Dr. Owen on the Hebrews, Vol. 3d. Fol. it, *prevalent against opposition.* It is able to still the Causes of our unquiet Tumult, and suppress the furious Agitations that roll within our Breasts. Tho' thou hast Great Troubles, yet the *Consolations* Job 15. 11

of God are not small with us. Thio' thou also as well as the Wicked dost sometimes look like a *Troubled Sea*, yet with this Difference, he remembers God and is troubled, Isa. 57. 20. Psal. 77. 3.

whereas in the multitude of thy Troubled Thoughts

Thoughts

Thoughts his Comforts delight thy Soul, Psal. 94. 19. The Gospel is so universally contrived in the whole Frame of it, thro' all its Counsels, Promises, Experiences, that *when He giveth Quietness*, there is none can *cause Trouble*. He hath *sweet Morsels* to roll under thy Tongue, after thou hast taken *bitter Pills* from him, *This is my*

Job 34. 19.

Psal. 119.
50.

Cant. 2. 3.

Col. 4. 8.

1 Thes. 4.
18.

17.

Comfort in mine Affliction. God hath so suitably provided Gospel-Grace, and so order'd it in all the Tribulations of his Children, that they might be encouraged to rest quietly under his shadow, who shakes down *some Fruit* into their Laps, as a Testimony that he doth *know their state*, and will *comfort their Hearts*: And therefore be of good cheer, and *comfort one another with these words*.

Seventeenthly, The Gospel hath *Resolving Provisions*, to answer thy *Scruples*, and remove all thy *Doubts and Fears*. The Soul oftentimes puts such Questions about its own State, that it needs a *Messenger with it*, and an *Interpreter* one of a thousand, Job 33. 23. Sick Souls as well as Sick Bodies do require an able spiritual *Doctor* by 'em, to *shew unto Man his uprightness*; i. e. * To shew how he must come to be presented Righteous and

and upright in the sight of God; and whether the Sick or Doubting Party may be yet in such a Case. Now for this an Interpreter is requisite; not only a Man that can speak the *Language of Canaan*, but also read the *Hand-writing* which the Finger of God's Spirit hath written, tho' in so small a Character, that he who carries the Book may not read the *Hand*: Such a Text-man is call'd an *Interpreter*, and an Interpreter one of a *Thousand*, or as * some read it, One of *many* Thousands. *Dissolving of Doubts* was one of the things that made *Belshazzar's* Queen conclude of *Daniel*, that *the Spirit of the Holy gods was in him*. Oh! what Spirit then is that in the Gospel, that will resolve thy Soul-Doubts, and tell thee *if perhaps the Thought of thy Heart may be forgiven thee?* that will untye the very Knot that lay upon thy mind, thou didst not dare to utter? This is an *Interpreter* indeed, one of a *Thousand*, one of ten *Thousand Casuists*; He is one that speaks as never Man spake. The Spirit of God is one that can speak *in us*, when a *Man*, or a meer *Angel from Heaven* could only speak *to us*. It may be, with

Ad exponendum Homini, i. e. pro homine in usum hominis. Mercer in loc. Isa. 19. 18. Dan. 5. 16.

* Multis & millibus unus. Mr. Mat. Pool, Morn. Ex. Giles's in the Field. Dan. 5. 11, 12.

Acts 8. 22.

Gal. 1. 8.

Ruth 1.20. with Naomi, the Almighty hath dealt ve-
 * Dr. Tho. ry bitterly with thee; and perhaps, as
 Fuller, * one Notes it, thou makest four Faces,
 Comment. whilst thou canst not resolve the Doubt,
 on Ruth. whether with Ephraim thou art God's
 pag. 122. pleasant Child, or no; yet the Gospel
 Jer.31.20. hath a Spirit will search this out, be-
 Psal.44.21 cause it searcheth the Deep Things of God.
 1Cor.2.10 If there be never so many Dark cir-
 cumstances in thy state that puzzle thee,
 Gen.40.8. yet do not Interpretations belong to God?
 Dan. 2.47. He is a Revealer of Secrets, and will
 Acl.27.23. tell thee whose thou art, and whom thou
 Deut.32.4. servest; yea, a God of Truth that will
 not belye thy Case. Ah! thou art of-
 ten at a loss to know what God would
 have thee do, but God hath made Pro-
 vision in the Gospel to shine upon thy
 Path, and make thy way clear, that
 when the Spirit bids thee go, thou shalt
 go on with thy Duty, as Peter did with
 the Three Men from Cesarea, doubting
 nothing, Acts 11. 12. There's not a
 Scruple you make, but the Grace of God
 can make reply to it: Not a Knot, which
 either the Devil or your own Fearful
 Hearts may tye, but the Sword of the
 Eph.6.17. Spirit waits to cut in sunder; that in
 whatsoever you doubt, you might go
 into

the Great Supper of the Parable.

189

into the Sanctuary and enquire, and God Pfal. 73. 17
shall reveal even this unto you. Phil. 3. 15.

Eighteenthly, The Gospel hath saving 18.
Provisions, suited to the Condition of the
Lost Sheep of the House of Israel. Tho' Matt. 10. 6.
you apprehend that you are in jeopardy
every hour, yet the Gospel is prepared 1 Cor. 15. 30.
to shew forth his Salvation from Day to
Day: Tho' you think the Pit is ready
to receive you in, and shut her mouth Psa. 56. 2.
upon you, even Hell, while the Graves Psa. 69. 15.
are ready for you, yet the Gospel opens Job 17. 1.
the Everlasting Gates, that you may look
thro' a Door of Hope. Tho' you Mourn Psa. 24. 7, 9.
in your Complaints and make a Noise, yet Hos. 2. 15.
he can still the Voice of your crying, when Psal. 55. 2.
he stops the Voice of his Justice, and
prepare you to sing of Mercy: Tho' you Psa. 101. 1.
count it that for your Parts, your Hope
is gone, and your Branch is withered, Ezek. 37. 11.
yet he that planted it by the Rivers of Psal. 1. 3.
Water, will cause it to bud and spring
forth again. In a word, tho' you cry
out with those Frighted Mariners in
Paul's Ship, that all Hopes of being saved Act. 27. 20.
is taken away, yet the Gospel still suits your
Case, for the Son of Man came to seek
and to save that which was lost, Matth.
18. 11. He finds you out, tho' you are
got

got where you *lose* your selves, tho' you are muffled up in shades, or *hid* behind the Stuff, or covered over with Dust, or disguis'd with Tears, or wrapt in a *Mantle of Confusion*, you throw in a Fright about you.

1 Sam. 10.
21.

Psal. 109.
29.

19. *Nineteenthly*, The Gospel hath *All-sufficient Provisions*, suited to the *Condition of wretched Creatures*, sunk below the *Recovery of any Men or Angels*. God can do for thee, what *Men*, Neighbours, thine Acquaintance, Companions, Brethren, nay, thy own *Flesh and Blood* cannot. The very Called and Chosen of

Eph. 2. 13. God that are *made nigh* to Christ, can but stand round about thee weeping, but the Lord can break in with *Tender Mercies*, and in thy *Low Estate* recover thee: *I was brought low and he helped me*, Psal. 116. 6. last words. It is the work of God, and beyond the sufficiency of *Men*; God's *Friends* may *pity* thee, but 'tis God himself must *favour* thee; thou may'st lye in thy *Pit* while their

Luk. 1. 78.
Psal. 136.
23.

1 Sam. 3. 49. *Eye trickleth down with Tears*, but
Isa. 53. 1. *the Arm of the Lord* can quickly draw thee out. They may *lament* thee fallen, but he can *lift thee up*: *I looked and there was none to help, therefore my own Arm brought*

brought Salvation, Isa. 63. 5. * When God sought but a little Help of Man, to do his People Justice, he found not one appear'd; much more then doth it note an Insufficiency for any Helper besides Him that hath the All-sufficiency of Free-Grace and Power, to save Men, tho' sunk in Misery, (thro' an Original Apostacy.) If God should look out for Help thro' the whole Creation round, he would never find any but what himself brings: And He can speak a word, which neither Heaven nor Earth, Angels or Men, ever dare pronounce, *My Grace is sufficient for thee*, 2 Cor. 12. 9.

* Arthur Jackson upon Isai. 4th. Vol. somewhat changed from the Author's.

Lastly, The Gospel hath *Eternal Provisions, suited to the continuance of Man's Immortal Spirit*. As the Soul must endure for ever, the Gospel hath Provisions to make it Happy thro' the same endless Parallel. Do you hope as *Heirs of the Kingdom*, for a *Kingdom that cannot be shaken*? why, the Gospel hath such a *Kingdom prepared for you*, Matth. 25. 34. Heb. 12. 28. Do you hope for *Glory*, when you see a *Full End of Grace*? why, *Heaven is the Hope that is set before you*. Do you expect more than to be *ransomed for a little moment here*? the Gospel

20.

Jam. 2. 5;

Heb. 6. 18.

Gospel suits with your Expectation, for *the ransomed of the Lord shal return, and come to Zion with Songs, and Everlasting Joy upon their Heads, Isa. 35. 10.* It is an Eternal Inheritance that is prepared for the *Heirs of the Grace of Life, Heb. 9. 10. an Eternal Salvation, Heb. 5. 9. an eternal weight of Glory, 2 Cor. 4. 17.* In one word, you can never see a Full End of these *All Things*, tho' you look

Gen. 49. 26 towards the utmost Bounds of the Everlasting Hills. And thus I have shewn, that as the Feast of the Gospel is full and plenteous, so it is a Banquet of suitable Provisions that do fit all the Guests of it. And Oh! that now as *Man* bath try'd to suit them, and Apply them to your Case, so God would by the Application of his Spirit *press these Clusters* for you into a *Cup of Saving Health.*

VII.

The *Seventh* thing is to give some Account, *Why* it is a Feast with *All Things* in it.

1 Reaf.

1. It is so *in regard of the Great Founder*, who is a God *that had All Things to give.* It is not the Provisions of a mortal Man, but the Supper of the great King; and no wonder when a King Feasts

Feasts his Subjects, if he hold a *Feast* in his House, *like the Feast of a King*. The Lord is a Great God, and a Great King above all gods, Psal. 95. 3. And therefore the Entertainment he makes, must be a Feast that hath Provisions above all Feasts whatever, a Feast with *All Things* in it. *The King sitteth at his Table*, and the Feast of a King proclaims a Full Table, and the Royal Founder of Divine Grace makes this Heavenly Fare the greater. If this Great Provider were not God, he could do nothing; *Nihil dat quod in se non habet*: None can supply another with what he hath not himself antecedently; but now All Things are *eminenter in Deo*, that is, they are dwelling by a Transcendent Fulness in him; he is *the God of all Grace*, 1 Pet. 5. 10. first words; and therefore he gives us *all this Plenty*. We may say of every Dish made ready for God's Table, as David spoke of the Materials he had made ready for the Temple, 1 Chron. 29. 16. *All this Store — cometh of thine Hand, and is all thy own*. In himself is the Abundance of All Things, and therefore *the abundant Grace redounds*. There is a Full Treasure in God, and therefore

1 Sam. 25.
35.

Song 1. 12:

Joh. 9. 33.

2 Cor. 4. 15.

a Full Table he hath disht and garnisht forth for us. *This is the Lords Doing*, Psal. 118. 23. and therefore nothing *Defective* in it. The Lord had so many Things to give, that he *made bare his Holy Arm*, Isa. 52. 10. that nothing might hang in his way, to obstruct the Communication of a Full Gift to us. In a word, he is All, and therefore he hath all ready.

a Reaf.

2. The Gospel is a large Feast, with All Things ready, because, *wheresoever God bestows that one Gift, the Lord Jesus Christ, he gives in all other Things with him*. Every Child of God hath a Richer Portion than he thinks of, meerly for his Elder Brother's sake : For He that *spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us * all, how shall he not with Him freely give us all Things*, Rom. 8. 32. When God provided his Son, he would to magnifie this *unspeakable Gift*, bestow a House-full of all other good, that his Family should have *Plenty*, and every Day *variety*. When he parted with his Jewel, he purchased *All Things* with it. The Price of that dear Blood could not procure less than to buy in *all Provision*. The Pouring out of Christ's Blood

* Gave
him up to
Death for
the Salva-
tion of all
the Elect.
Dickson
upon the
Epistles.

2Cor. 9. 15

Blood made *the Cup of Salvation* brim-
full: So that when we receive of Christ's
Merits we *receive a full Reward*; we shall
not be kept upon Gospel-Grace with
Part, when we have Christ that fully
paid for *All*.

3. There be all Things, because *they*
all spring from God's abundant Love and
Goodness: What he gives, he gives with
all his Heart, and he that hath a *Large-*
ness of Heart infinitely more than the
Sand upon the Sea-shore, is large in
Communicating, and in his Gifts doth
not bestow *Little Matters* on us; Eph.
2. 4. *But God who is rich in Mercy, for*
the great Love wherewith he loved us. He
put forth his *Heart*, and then he put
forth *both Hands* for us. The Act of
his *Will* to love us, awakened and call'd
up the Mercy of his *Nature* to appear
for us; and from hence where he sets
his Love, (as *Psal. 91. 14. He hath set*
his Love upon me;) there he provides
All Things to shew it. It was such a
manner of Love, (*1 Joh. 3. 1. Behold*
what manner of Love the Father hath
bestowed upon us) that when it ap-
pears, makes no less matters of it.
All Love overlooks our Defects, and
did

did not think All Things too many.

- The Largeness of the Divine Love in making such a Feast ready, may be *heightened* by a Consideration of his Bounty in *Common Mercies* to us. It is a *Royal Act* of Grace, that affords us any thing from *Court*. *He* is a Benefactor that prepares our *own* Tables, but the Riches of his Grace proclaim him more
- Mal. 1.12. Bountiful to furnish *the Table of the Lord*, and make the Gospel of his Son ready for us. It was Love and Bounty that filled *our Cup* to the Brim with common Mercies, but it was a larger Love than *this* that made the *Cup of Salvation* overflow. It was Love and Bounty that gave us *Corn*, that we ever see or hear of *the Shocks* of it to come in *in their Season*, in *the Appointed Weeks of the Harvest*., but it was a Larger Love that hath given us of *the Corn of Heaven*. It was Love and Bounty that he hath given for the Use of Man, to *drink of the pure Blood of the Grape*, (as *Wine* is called among that Inventory of the Good Things of Men, *Deut. 32. 14.*) but it was infinitely more that he gave us *Blood to drink*, even the Blood of *Jesus Christ*. Oh ! what a Large Love
- Psa. 116. 13.
- Job 5. 26.
- Jer. 5. 24.
- Psa. 78. 24.
- Rev. 16. 6.

Love was that, to give us one that should tread the Wine-press of his Father's Wrath! This was infinitely beyond the common Bounty that made our Presses to burst out with New Wine! Ira. 63. 3. Prov. 3. 10.

Oh! Love Emphatical! God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting Life, Joh. 3. 16.

If God had not left it upon Record, with a so he loved us, we had never had, no nor ever heard of such a Royal Entertainment, as the Riches of his Grace in Christ. Herein is Love, 1 Joh. 4. 10.

not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent his Son to be the Propitiation for our sins: Oh! what a Present, what a Gift of Love, what an unspeakable Gift 2Cor. 9. 15

is here! we may call the Gospel with an Emphasis a Love-Feast, a Feast filled infinitely more with Love than those *αἰνῶντος*,

those other Feasts of Charity, Jude v. 12. which were no more than * Entertain-
ments used in the Apostle's Days, and

* Banquets of Love: The Ground of these An-

cient Love-Feasts was Provision for the Poor Brethren, and preserving mutual Love among themselves. *Jenkyn upon Jude. Fol. pag. 111, 112.*

* These were Suppers used in the Primitive Times, either to manifest their Brotherly Union, or for the Comfort and Refreshing of the Poor, in Obedience to Christ's Injunction, *Luk. 14. 12, 13.* Dr. *Man-*
gus on Jude. p. 407.

the early Times of the Gospel to express a Love in the Primitive *Christians* (and all this was but the Love of *Creatures*) to one another : But the Gospel is a Feast of Charity that is filled with the

2 Pct. 4. 19 Love of a *Merciful Creator*, and a *Faithful Redeemer* to us : His Bowels opened, and he *shut up* nothing from us ; His Affections rolled towards us, and so brought in all to make a full Provision for us. It was a Large Love, and therefore a Little Flock feeds in large Pastures. He was a God * *plenteous in Mercy*, and therefore we have *plenteous Meat*.

* Psa. 86. 5.

v. 15.

Psa. 103. 8.

Hab. 1. 16.

A Reas.

4. It is the result of the whole Counsel of God, and therefore no wonder to see the Feast large. The Apostle not only calls it *Wisdom*, but the † *Manifold Wisdom* of God, Eph. 3. 10. The Infinite Wisdom of God did exert it self in such a wonderful *variety* of wise and mysterious Operations, that he hath laid before us a *Universal* Entertainment. Manifold Wisdom contriving what Dishes to provide, must needs find out Dainties, and prepare a great many. He that was *wonderful in Counsel* is also *excellent in working*, Isa. 28. 29.

† *Multiformis, vel, ut alij red- dunt multi- varia Sapi- entia. Bo- dius in loc. p. 368. col. 1.*

He

He who doth all Things according to the Counsel of his own Will, Eph. 1. 11. was a God that could search this out, even a Spiritual Feast with All Things ready. The Apostle argues it, Eph. 1. 8, 9. *Wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence; ——— according to his Good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself.* * The Lord did nothing rashly, or unadvisedly, or by chance, but carried on the whole Platform of the Gospel by Wise and Prudent Counsels. The Wisdom of God had the management and ordering of all that was ever made known by the Foolishness of Preaching to us: And this was sufficient to find out All Things for us, that his understanding was infinite. A Divine Contrivance could find out all the Dainties that any Poor Soul could ever want or wish: *IV Wisdom dwell with Prudence, and find out Knowledge of witty Inventions,* Prov. 8. 12. Wisdom searcheth, and discovers to us how his ways are past finding out.

* Inculcat, nihil hic temere, nihil inconsulto neq; fortuito contigisse. Idem. pag. 369. col. 2da.

1 Cor. 1. 21

Psa. 147. 5.

Rom. 11. 33.

5 Reaf.

5. It is a Provision against All Evils, and therefore nothing less than All Things would serve us. A Poor Soul that doth find it self to be in Temptations

2 Cor. 11.
23.

tions (it may be) *more abundant*, in difficulties *above measure*, in Afflictions *more frequent*, in Deaths *oft*, and tho' long brought up under the means of Grace, yet (perhaps) that Soul is still ready to cry out, *I was almost in all evil, in the midst of the Congregation and Assembly*, to allude to Prov. 5. 14. tho' I have lived under *Means*, yet still I need *Mercy*. Now *what* would have prevailed to have done such a Soul good, if *all Grace* had not abounded towards us. You have seen before what a *multitude* of Cases meet, some in one, some in another, many of them uniting and centring in the *same Person* : Now God hath provided All Things, that in our very

2 Tim. 2. 35

dividing of the VWord, we might have enough to give to every one a proper Portion, and you might all find some. In

Jam. 3. 2.

many things we offend all, and we had

Rom. 5. 18.

need of all, that Judgment might not pass upon all unto Condemnation. We fell into all sorts of Misery, and we had need of all sorts of Mercy.

6 ReaL

6. It is to procure all Happiness in God's Favour here, and his Full Presence hereafter ; and therefore he provides all things accordingly. To invest us in the Possession

Possession of all *Good*, it was necessary there should be the Provision of all *Good Things*. The *Means* must be correspondent to the *End*. All Men indeed are not saved, but yet the Gospel is (as the Apostle said he became) *All Things*, ^{1 Cor. 9. 22} that it might *by all means save some*: As the Apostle tries to pull *this* way, and *that* way, and the *other*, if he might *pluck a Brand out of the Fire*, and save it ^{Zech. 3. 2.} any ways from burning; so the Gospel comes in with this and that and the other Provision, even All Things ready, if it might but with any of them save us. Nothing must be excepted in the *means*, if we attain *the End of our Faith*: ^{1 Pet. 1. 9.} There must not be one Link of the Chain drop, if we are drawn to Heaven. There must be Election *to* Grace, or there can be no Effectual Calling, no Adoption, no Justification, no Sanctification, no Perseverance *in* Grace, (I mean the *State* of it) and there must be all these, or no Glorification *after*. So that All Things must be provided to *begin* our Happiness in God's Favour here, and to *perfect* it in his full Presence hereafter. The Gospel is to *advance* us, and therefore the *All Things* are

are the *many steps* to it. You can never *ascend* from the Bottom to the Top of *Jacob's Ladder*, if you do not pass thro' many *Rounds* between.

- 7 Real. 7. God hath been always providing; providing before Time, providing in Time, providing early, providing late, even to this moment, and therefore in the issue we must needs have rich Pasture. It is impossible but with all his Gettings, he should have got in all Things for us. The Gospel-Blessings he hath brought to your Ears (tho' of yesterday in the report) are the result of his Counsels that were of old. The Ancient of Days was not idle, before the Foundations of the world were laid, but was employ'd in accomplishing our Happiness, after he had built all Things in time. It was before the Sons of the Morning shouted, that he was making Supper ready. Before the very Worlds were framed by the Word of God, his Grace was a laying in of all Things in order. The Apostle takes great Notice of the Antiquity and Eldership of Divine Grace, Eph. 1. 4. and carries up the Date of it into an Eternity, *à parte ante*, before the Foundations of the World.
- Nature

Nature is young, but Grace is the First-born of Heaven. The great God was cutting out this work in Eternity, which we see in Time made up into such a Coat of divers colours. It was an Eternal Purpose, and therefore such full and various Preparations; according to the Eternal Purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, Eph. 3. 11. It is a Feast so large, because so long a getting. Gen. 37. 2.

8. They are all Things that God's People may have enough without meddling with any Things forbidden: It is measure running over without a Grain from the Devil's Heap. We have a Full Table from God, that we might not Covet of any Dish he hates: Gen. 2. 16. 17. — of every Tree of the Garden thou mayst freely eat, but of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, thou shalt not eat of it. 8 Reas. Luk. 6. 38.

* He grants him a vast Latitude to eat of all freely, that he need not be straitened to eat of that one Tree excepted. So in the Gospel it is all lovely Grace, that you might not cry after one Beloved Lust. All the Milk and Honey, the Spice and Balm, the Fruits and Clusters that grow in Canaan, that your Mouths may never water after the Leeks and * Mr. Cooper. Morn. Exer. at Giles's in the Fields. p. 84. Num. 13. 27. v. 24. Num. 11. 5 and

and Garlick, and stinking Onions, the Diet of the old Man in *Egypt*. He offers the *Fatness of the Olive*, that, having tasted it, we may never relish the Fruits of the wild Tree agen. You shall have

Rom. 11. 17. Bread enough and to spare, that you may not whine for *Husks*, or cry out for the *Trough* to be fed among Swine. You shall be provided with *Grace and Glory*, Things here and Things in Heaven, that you might not take up *with*, or be delighted in things viler than the Earth.

Luk. 15. 17. Psal. 84. 11.

9 Reas. 9. *It is that all Men's mouths may be stopt.* Oh! it is a *Silencing Argument* that makes God's own People Dumb, without a reply, when he comes to reckon up *his Mercies*, and *their* foul Mis-carriages: See it in *David*, 2 Sam. 12. 7, 8, 9. (where God is reproving *David* by his Servant *Nathan* the Prophet, for that scandalous Trespass, after he had gone in to Bathsheba,) Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, I anointed thee King over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the Hand of Saul, and I gave thee thy Master's House, and thy Master's Wives into thy Bosom, and gave thee the House of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would more-over

over have given unto thee such and such Things, wherefore hast thou despised the Commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight, &c. Now here David's mouth was stopt, the Provision that God made in so many things silenc'd him : He could not plead (after God had graciously conferr'd so much upon him) for the killing of *Uriah*, the snatching away of *Bathsheba*, and when God had given him the whole Flock of *Israel*, to usurp and drefs of the Poor Man's Ewe. 2 Sam. 12.

So likewise it was a silencing Argument to his Church of old, when he comes to reckon up the Mercies he had bestowed, in that Song of his Beloved, touching his Vineyard, Isa. 5. 1, 2. He had planted it in a Fruitful Hill, (but the Slip prov'd naught, there was nothing to be reprehended in the Soil, or the Scituation) He had (also) fenc'd it, (his Providence watched over it, his Protection was round about it, he kept out Thieves and Robbers by Night, that would have stole 'till they had enough; he fenc'd out the Wild Beasts from breaking in, and the subtle Foxes of the Desert from creeping thro') he gathered out the Stones thereof, (he took away such Hindrances

3. 4.

Obad. v. 5.

Ezek. 13. 4.

ces as were most likely to marr the Soil) *he planted it with the choicest Vine,* (no People under Heaven that he had chosen to do these Things for but They, no *Vine* but that which he *brought out of Egypt* did he ever plant in *Canaan*; he chose the Slip, and therefore the choicest, because the chosen *Vine*) *he built a Tower in the midst of it*; (he had plac'd a Tower of Defence to save them, in planting his own Presence there; as a Tower in the midst is a necessary Fortification to Command all the Out-works, and cover them under its Protection; yea, he built a Tower to discern all the Coasts round, and as a Watch-tower to observe all Enemies Postures, or Approaches towards it) *he had also made a Wine-press therein*; (the very Afflictions he order'd were all design'd in mercy, to press out and save the Liquor of their ripe Grapes, if they had brought forth any) insomuch that when God queries and expostulates hereon with them, it stoppt all their mouths. The whole House of *Judah*, and the Inhabitants of *Jerusalem* are all silenc'd, when God challengeth the Vineyard for their Wild Grapes; every one hereby came

came to be *Convicted in his own Con-* Joh. 8. 9.
science, and could make no reply to
God.

Now in the same manner these *all*
things are provided in the Gospel to
stop Sinner's mouths, who dare pro-
voke him to Displeasure, after all that
God hath made ready. I have done
thus and thus for thee, Sinner, and
made a Large *Feast* to encourage thee
to become my *Guest*; and what? dost
thou *kick at my Sacrifice*, and slight all 1 Sam. 2.
my Kindness? I have sent in Provision, 29.
and serv'd up one Course after another,
and wilt thou despise Mercy, and *turn*
all my Grace to wantonness? Oh! it will Jude v. 4.
shut the mouths of carnal, loose Pro-
fessors, that God's Hand hath been so
open towards them, Rom. 3. 19. lat. pt.
That every Mouth may be stopped, and all
the World may become Guilty before God.
Hadst thou trampled upon *One* Grace,
or *Two* Graces of the Spirit of God pro-
vided, thou hadst had of the Swine in
thee, but to trample upon the *Manifold* Eph. 3. 16.
Grace, all the Grace of God at once, and
tread under the *Pearl of Price*, Oh! Mat. 13. 46
what a cloven-footed Swine art thou!
God provides all Things to stop all Sin-
ners

ners Mouths : Indeed Sinners are naturally *talkative*, and think they have a great deal to *say* for themselves ; in the Parable *they all began to make excuse*, Luk. 14. 18. but however when all things are so *openly* provided, they can

Joh. 15. 22 *have no cloak for their sin*. God now writes it over the Door of their Lips, *therefore thou art inexcusable Oh Man*,

Rom. 2. 1. They who fancy they have enough to plead for themselves, will find God hath more, even all to put to silence

1 Pet. 2. 15

Psal. 39. 2.

Mat. 25. 73

* ἐπιμαρτύρηται

ore occlusus

est. Angl.

He was

muzzled, as

still in the

mouth, as a

Beast that

hath a Bit

put into

him, or a

muzzle laid

upon him.

Luk. 10. 42

the Ignorance of Foolish Men ; or, if they are not dumb with silence, their very speech

will bewray them, Luk. 19. 22. *Out of thy own mouth will I judge thee*.

If all things should not work upon thee, yet God will have them all Preacht, that thou

mayst be one of *them* whose Mouths must be stopt. * *And he was speechless*,

Matth. 22. 12. *He was so*, who thought it so slight a matter to be found where

All Things were ready, tho' he wanted the *one thing needful*.

In short, the more things there are in the Gospel, the fewer words such will have to say for them-

Isa. 53. 6. *selves, that turn each one to his way*.

10 Reaf. Lastly, *All Things* are provided, that

God may be admir'd and ador'd by the

Saints

Saints to all Eternity. A rich and plentiful Gospel shall cause these to *sing*, while it makes others *silent*. The Saints shall stand up for ever in Admiration of *this Supper of the Gospel*, when they are got to that *other Marriage-Supper of the Lamb*. And therefore the Second Coming of Christ (when he shall come in the Clouds of Heaven) is set forth by this Blessed Description, *to be glorified in his Saints, and to be admir'd in all them that believe*, 2 Thes. 1. 10. As Christ's Personal Glory was a Ray that Shone from Everlasting, Job. 17. 5. Prov. 8. 23, &c. so Christ's * Social Glory (or the Glory of the Head in Fellowship and Conjunction with the Members) shall result to his Person from the Praises of the Elect. The Saints, *having the Harps of God*, will admire him in the Song of Moses, and in the Song of the Lamb for ever: Yea, the Saints shall then admire and adore him for those Things which the Angels already look into, 1 Pet. 1. 12. last words.

Rev. 19.9.

Mar. 24.30

* *Scattered on the Thessalonians.*

Rev. 19. 2, 3.

The Eighth Thing is to lay open what Hinderances do make it unto many ineffectual. The Feast of the Gospel meets with

VIII.

P

very

very *many*. Now that we may not suffer any of these Hinderances to *slip away* in the Crowd without Notice, it will be convenient to *seize* as many as we find, by stopping them at these *Two Doors*, and shewing *first* what Hinderances do make the Gospel *wholly* ineffectual to *Sinners*; and *secondly* what Hinderances peculiar do make it *in part* to be ineffectual to *Saints*.

- I. *First*, The Hinderances of *Sinners* that render this Feast of the Gospel ineffectual to Them are *numerous*, no less than these *Eighteen*. 1. *Insensibleness of the Things of God*. 2. *Inward Captivity of the Mind*. 3. *Ignorance*. 4. *Obstinacy*. 5. *Other Banquets*. 6. *The Cares of this Life*. 7. *Slothfulness*. 8. *Prejudice*. 9. *The General Disesteem which the Gospel meets with in the World*. 10. *Bad Company*. 11. *Carnal Relations*. 12. *False Teachers*. 13. *A Conceit of Self-Fulness*. 14. *Scandals*. 15. *Carnal Disappointment*. 16. *Plain dealing*. 17. *Sometimes open Persecution*. 18. *God's Righteous Induration*, his hardning and giving them up judiciously.

1 Hinderance!

First, Insensibleness of the Things of God, or a Spiritual Death in sin. If we Preach

Preach to a Company of *Moral Stocks*, that are no more affected with the Doctrines of the true God, than if we had Preacht up Stocks, and *Dumb Idols*, and the *Doctrine of Vanities*, alas! *what doth* Jer. 10. 8. *it profit?* The Gospel indeed hath *Enlivening* Provisions, as hath been shewn, but there be many nevertheless *Dead in* Jam. 2. 16. *Sin*, that have not yet received them. Oh! how do we Preach still, as if the Assembly were a *Golgotha*, a *Place of* Mat. 27. 33 *Dead Men's Skulls!* alas! how small is the *inner* in comparison of the *outer* Court among us! how many come to *Meetings*, that never *met with God!* how many *Graves* have the Trumpet sounded over, that never yet have *opened and* Rev. 20. 13 *given up their Dead!* we wait to see that *Question* graciously resolved in the Affirmative, *shall the Dead arise and praise* Psal. 88. 10. *thee?* Some, blessed be the Lord, are made *Living Men*, *because he lives, they* Joh. 14. 19 *do, and shall live also.* But how do we Preach Christ Jesus the *Resurrection* to chap. 11. 25 a great many others that never found *Life!* that were never yet awakened! never sensible, never stirred! never had the *Beginnings* of any Good Work upon them! These are Dead, Rom. 5. 15.

Thro' the offence of one, many be Dead; Dead in Sins, Eph. 2. 5. Now All Things to him that is insensible, or not spiritually risen from the Dead, are nothing. So long as a Man is Stupid, there comes not a Sigh, or ever one Groan, or Tear from him. You must be prickt at the Heart before the Liquor runs: 'Till then, no Pantings, no Desires, no Enquiries, no melting Warmth, no Motions of the Soul towards God. If thou art a meer Carkass in Divinity, or Profession with thy Pulse gone, thine Affections lost, thy Breath stopt, and thou art found but just where Adam (our first Father that sinned) left thee: This will be an insuperable Hinderance to thee, 'till it be taken out of the way. And yet this is the Condition, this is the State of every one by Nature.

Acts 2. 37.

Isa. 43. 27.

2 Thes. 2. 7

2 Hindran.

Secondly, *An inward Captivity of the Soul.* 1. Under Sin. And 2. By the God of this World.

1. Captivity under Sin is a Hinderance to the Gospel-Feast. If a Man be not in such a stupid, blockish Case, as to remain grossly Dead, and altogether insensible of the Things of God, but suppose him some ways Apprehensive, brisk and

and lively in his Temper and Deportment ; yet if sin commands him, he is but a *merry Slave* still, and a stranger to Gospel-Grace : For so long as a Man is overcome of the evil *that doth so easily beset him*, he is made a True Slave to it, 2 Pet. 2. 19. latter part. Of whom a Man is overcome, of the same is he brought in Bondage : His Iniquities seize him, and carry him off as a Bond-slave, without his own Resistance : A Lust sets upon the Soul and ravisheth her, and whether it finds her *in the House*, or *in the Field*, she never like the Betrothed Damsel * *Cried to Christ for Help.* This is an easie Conquest, a voluntary Surrender, a Running into the Enemy's Hand. Now 'tis no wonder, that Men are hindred from the Things of God, when their *Iniquities withhold Good Things* from them ; *your Iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his Face from you* — Isa. 59. 2. Sin like a mighty Cord draws the Wicked more and more from God, and then winds so fast about them, they can make *no return* ; Sin at last will hold them in the snare, notwithstanding all their faint * *Velleities* to

Heb. 12. 1.

* Nisbet upon Peter. Deut. 22. 24.

* *Wishings and Wouling, as some ex-*

Proy. 5. 22.

† *Peccata
quæ nexu-
ili, instar
Retium &
Tendicula-
rum sunt,
quæ vin-
ctum te, &
constrictum
tenebant, ut
te expedire
nequeas.*
Cartwright
in loc.

2 Kings
10. 18.

escape, whether they will or no. *His own Iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the Cords of his sins.* Men first give way to sin, and at last sin † *twines* so close about them, they can never get free, or, by all the Art and Endeavours they use, make it *loose its hold*. Natural Conscience at first makes them *start*, while it hath beheld how the Snare hath caught them, but *afterwards* Conscience *wasts*, and they sin under the Dominion of the Tyrant with more Greedy *Delight* than ever. This is most notably represented in the Prophet, *Isa. 5. 18. Wo unto them that draw Iniquity with Cords of Vanity, and sin as it were with a Cart-rope.* The Holy Ghost seemeth to speak there of the brisk, active Servants of Sin, who scorn *with Ahab to serve it a little*, but with *Jehu will serve it much*, as *Jehu* counterfeits in the Case of *Baal's Priests. That draw Iniquity with Cords.*] There is a Generation of Active Sinners in the World, that will bring wickedness in by the Hand, if a Temptation be slow-paced and doth not come fast enough alone, or present it self quickly: If Sin *would* should be long a coming, the wickedness

kedness of their *Hearts* is impatient, and will go out half way to meet it, for *Prov. 4. 16* they sleep not except they have done mischief; and their sleep is taken away unless they cause some to fall; they hate either to go to Bed, or to rise without sin with them. And sin as it were with a * *Mr. Pool.* Cart-rope.] * As Beasts commonly do that *Engl. Annotations.* draw Carts with Ropes. (a) "Whilst (a) *Arth. Jackson.* "others are drawn away to sin, they "draw sin upon themselves. It denotes "the Great Pains they take, and their "toilfom endeavours they use with all "possible Eagerness to accomplish what "they have contrived. They will pull hard, like a Man at a Cart-rope, when he is binding Sheaves in the Field, rather than suffer sin to lye loose upon them, and hazard its dropping off. Now these in this mighty struggling with the Cord, are caught fast in it, and lye bound worse than *Samson* with the *New Ropes*, that if they would, they cannot get away. When Sin hath *Dominion* over them, they are made to do its *Drudgery*. The *Will of the Flesh* is put in opposition to *Joh. 1. 13.* the *Will of God*. If sin therefore reign in your mortal Body, that you should obey it in the Lusts thereof, *Rom. 6. 12.* His

Servants ye are, to whom you obey, v. 16.
 And if you are the *Slaves* of sin, you are no *Subjects* of the King that hath made this Gospel-Supper ready, nor will you be able 'till freed to meddle with it.

2. Captivity under the God of this World is also a Hinderance to the Gospel-Feast. The Devil *hates* the Gospel, and he will allow none of his to *love* it. He keeps them as much as possible under *Blindness*, least if they see the *light*, they should break loose : 'Tis therefore ascribed to the Malignant Influence of the god of this World to blind wicked Men, 2 Cor. 4. 4. *In whom the god of this World hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, least the Light of the Glorious Gospel of Christ, who is the Image of God, should shine into them.* If the Devil did not keep his Prison-windows, as well as his Prison-Doors fast, his Prisoners would not lye contented, or be so quiet in their Place, to see by *Christ's* Light this Black Gaoler buckle on their Chain. Now this Blinding Power which he hath over them follows upon their Captivity they are in under him ; for when God leaves them in his Hand, Satan uses them at his

his own Pleasure : He is a Tyrant where-
 ever he is a *Conquerour*, and deals with
 his Slaves as *Nebuchadnezzar* with *Ze-
 dikhah*, when he carries them Captive,
 he binds them in Fetters, and puts out Jer. 39. 7.
 their Eyes : And tho' they cannot see,
 they shall be still made to work, for he
 deals with them too as the *Philistines*
 did with *Samson*, they must grind in his
 Prison-house, (to allude to those words Judg. 16. 21.
 literally, tho' in *Samson* we may under-
 stand them, as (b) some do, *Metaphori-
 cally*, to represent **how** he did perform
 the Offices of Nature, as eating, drink-
 ing, and being nourished there, &c.) (b) See Dr.
 Oh! there's many an old Slave of the *Smith's
 Pourtrai-
 sure of
 Old Age.
 p. 116.*
 Devil's kept so hard under a Spiritual
 Chain, that they can't stir a Foot to
 partake of this Feast. Poor Sinners that
 have been (c) as it were the *Electors* of
 him to the *Government*, and by their sin
 made him the god of this World, have
 chosen a mighty Tyrant over them, that
 now it may be they are so *taken Captive* (c) Char-
 by him at his Will, that he will not let
 them go their Chain's length to any
 means of Grace. This is another mighty
 Hinderance, which makes Gospel-Grace
 oftentimes very ineffectual to Men.

Thirdly,

(c) Char-
 nock's Dis-
 courses.
 The First
 Volume.
 p. 68.

2 Tim. 2.
 26.

3 Hindran. Thirdly, *Ignorance*, and *Carnal Apprehensions of the Things of God*. Men do naturally want *Illumination*, and mistake the very *Notions* of the Grace of God sometimes, but, if they hit upon right *Notions*, they may still fall short of an *Experimental Acquaintance* with those Things, *having their Understanding darkened*, Eph. 4. 18. or † darkened in their *Intellectuals*, obscur'd and blemish'd in their *Reasoning Faculty*, they are brought into corrupt and deceitful *Argumentations*: The Natural Man hath little other *Logick* besides what those Two corrupt *Tutors*, the Devil and his own Heart, read him, that is made all up of *Fallacy*, and makes him conclude he is *safe*, because he *sees no hurt*. The Apostle hath given a very Faithful and clear account of it, 1 Cor. 2. 14. *The Natural Man receiveth not the Things of the Spirit of God, for they are Foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.* The Natural Man.] It is not the *Carnal Man*, as some would strenuously try to render it, but the * *Animal*, or *Souly Man*, as the word imports; i. e. it is rather the Man that hath a Principle of *Fleshly Wisdom* to guide

† Επκοις-
μωσις τῆ
φύσεως. Gr.

* ψυχῶν
ανθρωπίνων,
is one that
hath all
that is
or can
be derived
from the
first Adam,
one en-
dowed
with a Ra-
tional Soul,
and who
hath the
use and
exercise of
all its Ra-
tional Fa-
culties.
Dr. Owen
of the Spi-
rit. p. 217.

guide him, than the Man that hath only Carnal Affections to *over-ballast* him ; but tho' he be ($\Psi\chi\mu\Theta$) a Man of never so great a Soul, one of a piercing insight to reach and perceive other Things, a clear-ey'd Observer in all humane Speculations, yet 'tis otherwise when he hath the Things of God before him ; for without a Spiritual Apprehension superadded to his most sublimated Reason, and exquisite Knowledge in Philosophy and Politer Learning, he receives them not, & ὁκείλει , he doth not take, or apprehend them ; you may reach them out to him, but he cannot take them *with one of his Fingers* : For the words [*not receiveth*] do imply (as a (d) Learned Man observes) an *offer* of those Things. Men's Intellectuals are blind ; Sinners naturally argue *wrong*, and from thence in their Actions run to *Crooked* ways. (e) "A *Dark Mind* is ever accompanied with a *Disobedient Heart* ; "where there is no sharing in the *Light* "of Christ, there can be no subjection "to the *Law* of Christ. Now this Hindrance may be opened under a Four-fold Division in reference to the Gospel-Feast,

(d) *char-*
nock's Dis-
courses.
2d. Vol.
pag. 497.

(e) Mr.
Matth.
Mead,
Good of
Early O-
bedience.
p. 319.

I. Ignorance

1. Ignorance of the *Invitation* that calls, is a Hinderance. Poor Sinners discern not what Grace utters, when it tells them how Bowels of Mercy yearn over them. They mistake God's Voice for a Poor mortal Man's, like Samuel while a young Stripling, that took God's Voice for Eli's, 1 Sam. 3. 6. *Here am I, for thou didst call me.* The Lord had called him in the 4th. Verse, Samuel; and Samuel misunderstands; the Lord calls him again in the 6th. Verse, and still Samuel mistakes the Voice, for Samuel did not yet know the Lord, neither was the Word of the Lord yet revealed to him. Thus, under the Gospel, if Men have an outward without an inward Call, they may hear a Sound, but know not the meaning of the Voice; if there be not a Divine Light shining, the Messenger may be as a Barbarian speaking. Sinners understand not an Ambassadour of God, 'till the Spirit interpret that Language in which he speaks to them. Who then is the better for a Feast, that utterly misunderstands and mistakes the *Invitation*? what signifies *Spiritual* Provision, when Men have *Carnal* Thoughts about, and are meer Strangers to, a saving Call to take

1 Cor. 14.
11.

take it? no wonder, if it hinders the Banquet, when you are (any of you) held back for want of *knowing* that sweet and inviting Call that bids you.

2. Ignorance of the *Master of the Feast* that provides, is a Hinderance thereunto. Sinners do not know *the great God* that makes it. When the World have thought themselves wisest, yet still *the World by Wisdom knew not God*, 1 Cor. 1. 21. They are meer Strangers to the Action of God the *Father* in sending Christ into the World with these Provisions. The King sends his Servant, or this *Messenger of the Covenant*, to Mal. 3. 1. treat with Poor Sinners, and because his *Deity* was vail'd with Fleth, *Flesh and Blood* did not know him. (f) A (f) Dr. very Learned and Holy Man hath thus Owen, Meditations and Discourses on the Glory of Christ. = remarkt it, "The World was so far from looking on him as the *True God*, "that it believ'd him not to be a *Good* of Christ. pag. 79. "*Man*. Nay, the Father and the Son were both unknown alike, *Joh. 8. 19.* middle pt. *Jesus answered, ye neither know me, nor my Father.* Alas! what was a Spiritual Feast to a Poor, Ignorant and Carnal Generation, that neither knew *God* who provided it, nor *Jesus Christ* that came

came from him with it. So *Job. 4. 10.* *If thou knewest who it is that saith unto thee, Give me to drink ; speaking there to the Samaritaness who was Ignorant of him that brought the Provision of the Gospel with him : Christ had there to do with a Poor, Ignorant Woman, that took him for no more than a common Jew, with whom such Samaritans as she had no Dealings, v. 9. How is it that thou being a Jew, askest Drink of me that am a Woman of Samaria, for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans ?* Alas ! so long as she continued Ignorant of Christ, she was never the better for all that Living Water in him ! tho' it was **Jesus**, he would not save her, so long as she lookt upon him as a meer Jew, and wanted an Eye to look thro' the *Vail of his Flesh*, and by Faith see the Son of God in him. Thus, Sinners that have heard of the Gospel will be hindred from partaking of it, so long as they discern not by Faith *who* provides it. God's Ministers in the Pulpit may say to Sinners, Come ; God's People may be trying to deal with them too in private, and both to see, if they can perswade them into a Love with the ways of *Sion* ; but

Heb. 10. 20

but if Sinners are still Ignorant of Jesus Christ who speaks by his Friends to them, this Feast is an Entertainment that is likely to do no good *upon* them. Men are apt to conclude we go about to *Profelyte* them to a *Party*, and draw *Disciples after us*, and thus it will be 'till they come to believe on Christ, thro' *our* words to them. And therefore Christ prays for all that should see their Master's *Mind* in the *Servant's Message*, Joh. 17. 20. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me thro' their Word.* Not believe on *you*, tho' thro' *your* words on *Me*. 'Tis *your* Message, but *my* express *Will*. Act. 20. 30.

3. Ignorance of the *Provisions made ready* is a Hinderance to them. Men are *Fools and Blind*, and don't see *what* is set before them, no more than *who* it is that hath got it served *up*. Christ also reprehends this piece of Ignorance in the same Woman of *Samaria*, Joh. 4. 10. *If thou knewest the Gift of God.* An Ignorance of what Christ *hath*, as well as of what Christ *is*, is an ordinary and frequent Ground of the Sinners Miscarriage to him. *If thou knewest the Gift.*] Were thine *Heart* sensible of the *Grace* that Mat. 23. 17

that is now brought *so nigh at Hand*, it would make it leap within thee, and thou wouldst not rest 'till matters were at another pass with thee. Alas! if you don't know the *Gift* in the Gospel, you will partake of no *Gospel-Grace* by it. If you are Ignorant of the *Table* he hath prepar'd, you will never *sit at Meat*. If Men have low, carnal Conceits of the Good Things of God, and carry their Thoughts no further than the *Letter*, when the *Spirit* speaks herein, it will beget ordinary Conceptions in the Mind, and prove an Hinderance to the Gospel. There will be no Spiritual Application of the *Substance*, so long as our Thoughts rest and terminate superficially upon some *Corporeal Image*: This was the Grand Miscarriage of a great many Followers of our Lord, who seem'd to Covet to wait upon him in a *Body*, with a great deal of Religious Zeal and Forwardness. Our Blessed Lord had Preacht this Doctrine of a spiritual Repast, and manifested himself to be the Provision which the Soul by Faith must live upon; whereas it begat only in the * *Jews* a gross Conceit of some Literal and Corporeal Banquet that Christ aimed at, and

* Or, *Carnalities*.

and rais'd in them a certain Question even to *Indignation*, as they strove among themselves, *saying, How can this Man give us his Flesh to eat?* Joh. 6. 52. insomuch that Christ taxeth their Ignorance, by expounding to them his own Doctrine, v. 63. latter pt. *The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit*; as if he had said, I have been upon a spiritual Subject, but you have not understood me: I have spoken of a Feast to nourish you *inwardly*, but it is your own Ignorant Fancy that suggests the Corporeal Images of other Meats and Drinks, as when *ye did eat of the Loaves and were filled*, v. 26. Now when the Gospel in the *Matters* of it is ignorantly mis-interpreted, it becomes a like Hinderance to it. If it be not apprehended and experienc'd a Feast of the *Soul*, we shall rest in *outward* Conveyances, and lose the *Kernel* by holding fast the *Shell*. It will be but as if we *made Provision for the Flesh*, if we receive it not as a Feast of the *Renewed Mind*, which our *Flesh knows not of*. We must be spiritually enlightned to *know the Things that are given to us of God*; for *He that is spiritual judgeth all things*, 1 Cor. 2. 15. Besides,

Rom. 13.

14.

Joh. 4. 32.

1 Cor. 2. 12

Q

sides, Ignorance of Gospel-Provisions causes Men to turn the Truth of God into a Lye, and embrace an *Error* instead of
 Eph. 4. 21. *the Truth as it is in Jesus.* This is a Hinderance therefore to the Holy Feast we speak of. You are like to be fed with no other *Mannah* than that which will *breed Worms and stink*, if you are ignorant of the *True Bread*.
 Exod. 16. 20.

4. *Ignorance of the Way by which every one must come*, is likewise a Hinderance that keeps from these Provisions. If you take it as a sufficient Act to put forth a little of your *own Strength* towards God, and rest in *Dead Works*, it will hinder your *Benefit* by the Gospel-Entertainment. You must throw your selves upon Christ as *Sinners*, this is your first Work, to come as you *are*, and venture upon the Son of God, and afterwards God's Spirit gradually works such Qualifications that you may come
 2 Cor 6. 18. *then as Sons and Daughters.* The Substance of this is represented in that *Directory* for Conversion which Christ taught the *Jews*, Joh. 6. 28. 29. *Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, this is the work*

work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. It is to believe, and not properly to (g) work. Such as sit down upon outward Performances, without going forth to Jesus Christ to rely on him by Faith, do assuredly sit upon Thorns, tho' a little slight Covering they have woven, or patcht together from Works that cometh betwixt, may Job 36.32. at present bear off their Pricking, that now they feel no smart. Faith it self indeed is a Work, but doth not justifie as a * Work: It justifies no otherwise than as it apprehends a justifying Object, and it is a saving Work, no otherwise than as it fastens and relies upon a saving Worker. Hence it cometh to pass, that without Faith it is impossible to please God, Heb. 11.6. Now Ignorance of this way to the Provisions in Christ, makes them unto many so ineffectual.

(g) Men indeed by Nature retain such an Impression of the first Covenant of Works, that they know no way of Acceptance before God, but by the way of Works. *Hutchinson upon John.*

* In opposition to all Works, Christ leads them to this one Work, that they believe. And his calling it a Work, doth not import that Faith as a Work doth justifie, for it is only the Hand to receive Christ who is our Righteousness: But he gives it this Name, speaking in their own Terms who doted on Works, and so the Doctrine of Faith is called a Law, Rom. 3.27. because the Jews boasted so much of the Law. *Hutchinson upon John. pag. 102.*

If you think it an easie matter to thrust

Q 2

into

in to God *any how*, without Christ as your *Way*, his Word as your *Rule*, and his Spirit as your *Guide*, you will profit little by the Gospel, so long as such a corrupt perswasion leads you: *Joh. 14. 6. I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. The Way.*] No access, or coming unto the Father but by *me. The Truth.*] No Doctrine can be found, that leads off from *me. The Life.*] You will ne-

Mat. 19. 17 ver enter into *Life*, if you enter not in by *me*, as the *Door*, and unto *me* as the *Provision*. Again, The *Word* must be your *Rule*, Psal. 119. 133: *Order my Steps in thy Word.* (h) If I step besides thy Law, (saith the Learned *Rivet*) I tread where the Ground will not bear my Feet, and where I am over Head and Ears in Dirt. Tho' Christ is the *Way*, yet we should never know what *Steps* to take *to* or *in* him, 'till the Word lays Christ forth, and discovers each of them to us. So for the *Spirit*, it's Guidance is necessary: The Spirit of God hath branded it as Foolishness in those that

(h) Si ex-
iva Legem
tuam ince-
do, non est
Stabile so-
lum sub Pe-
dibus meis,
caro de-
mergor. Ri-
vet. Via vi-
ta, sicut me-
dit. in Psal.
119. ope-
rum vol.
2 do. p. 472

Ezek. 13. 3 follow their own Spirit. There is no Spi-
rit fit to be our Guide but His. *Thy Spirit is Good, lead me into the Land of uprightness*, Psal. 143. 10. *Thy Spirit is*
good,

good, lead me, or, as (i) some read it, *(i) T. 10 Spi-
By thy Good Spirit lead me. If we had rita bino
Christ as the Way, and his Word as deduc me.
the Rule too, yet if we had not the Spi- Junius.
rit as our Guide, we should not by rea-
son of the Darkneſs in us and upon us,
ſee the Straitneſs and Perfection of the
Rule before us, or know of our ſelves
how at any Time to uſe it. There is
an abſolute need of the Spirit's Guid-
ance after Conversion, hence is that of
the Apoſtle inculcated, *Walk in the Spi-
rit*, Gal. 5. 16, 25. and *walk after the Spi-
rit*, Rom. 8. 1. and that Phraſe, *if ye be
led by the Spirit*, Gal. 5. 18. all which
do import a ſubmitting to the Con-
duct of the Spirit, as our Guide. And
if there be a need of the Spirit for *Saints*,
after they have received Chriſt, be ſure
there is a neceſſity of the Spirit's Guid-
ance for *Sinners* to bring them in to
Chriſt. Well, Ignorance of and Unac-
quaintedneſs with the way of the Lord,
muſt needs be an Hinderance to the
Feaſt of the Lord, that makes Sinners
deſire none of his *Dainties*. That is the
Third Hinderance.*

Fourthly, *Obſtinacy*, or an obſtinate ^{4 Hindran.}
Averſion to the Things of God. The Pa-

rable gives this account of it, *Matth.*
22. 3. that when the King had sent to
 call them that were bidden to the Sup-
 per, *they would not come.* Alas ! if Men
 will become their own Hinderers, no
 wonder that the Gospel proves ineffectu-
 al. If they will choose rather to *starve*
 than *eat*, how can a Feast preserve or
 relieve such as these ? and yet this is
 the wretched and deplorable Case of Sin-
 ners, their Hearts do naturally stand off
 from God, therefore *they say unto God,*
Depart from us, for we desire not the Know-
ledge of thy ways, *Joh 21. 14.* There is a
 mighty Stubbornness and Rebellion in the
 minds of Men that God takes Notice of,
 this was expressly laid open in the Jews,
Isa. 48. 4. I knew that thou art obstinate,
and thy Neck is an Iron Sinew, and thy
Brow brass. Sinners will choose Poverty
 and despise Riches, run into Misery and
Jonah 2. 8. forsake their own Mercy. The Gospel
 would pity, relieve and save them, but
 they are a stiff-necked Generation that
 will not *turn and live.* It would feed
Ezek. 18. 23. them, but they will rather dye of spi-
 ritual Hunger ; it would cloath them,
 but they will rather to Hell naked, than go
 with Christ's Robe to Heaven. They will

rot in their *Chains* before they will stoop to choose a *Free Release*, and will venture to fall *Blindfold into the Ditch*, rather than *anoint with Eye-salve*, or *wash in the Pool of Siloam*. Mat. 18. 14
Rev. 3. 18.
Joh. 9. 7.

Fifthly, *Other Feasts besides*. Tho' in the Gospel it is the Supper of the great God, yet in eating, Sinners have taken every one his own Supper before it, as the Apostle speaketh of the *Lord's Supper*. 5 Hindran.
1 Cor. 11. 21.

They will have Banquets to corrupt the *Flesh*, but none of that Holy Diet which might save their Spirits *in the Day of the Lord Jesus*. Sinners will snatch especially at these *Three, the Lust of the Flesh, the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life*, 1 Cor. 5. 5.
* Hec Tri

1 Joh. 2. 16. The World that reject a Feast provided by *Father, Son and Spirit*, yet will banquet with their own *Trinity*. pro trino
numine
mundus ha-
bet.

1. The Lust of the Flesh is a Banquet with Sinners that obstructs the Gospel-Feast. *Lusts of the Flesh* are such *Pleasures*, says (k) one, as Men find in Meat and Drink, or Women; either Intemperance or Incontinence. And then again, *Pleasures*, whether we consider them as *gross or vain*, the Pleasures of the *Body* or the *Mind*, do hinder the (k) Cotton
upon the
1 Epist. of
John.

The Gospel-Feast Opened, Or, Efficacy of Divine Provisions.

1. *Gross and Filthy Pleasures, or Fleshly Lusts* (as the Apostle Peter calls them)

* τὸν σαρικὸν ἐπιθυμι-
ων. Greek T. ἡδονὴν ἀλε-
αίρ κακῶν. Pleasure is a
Net that entangles ungod-
ly Men.

that War against the Soul,

1 Pet. 2. 11. * *Fleshly Con-*
cupiscences the Original reads
it, alluding to that *inbred*
Appetite of the old Man

which goes forth after morsels roasted
at the *Fire of Lust*, and took off the *De-*
vil's Spit. *Abstain*, saith the Holy Ghost,
from these. The *Lust of the Flesh* is a

Rom. 1. 26 bad Appetite, a vile Affection, that co-
verts to be a *Partaker with Devils*, and

Psa. 78. 25 rejects *Angels Food*. It will find out
a Banquet that quite spoils the Feast.

I may say here of the whole Gospel, as
the Apostle doth of the Lord's Supper in

1 Cor. 10. a Part of it, *Ye cannot drink the Cup of*
21. *the Lord and the Cup of Devils*; ye can-
not be *Partakers of the Lords Table and*

the Table of Devils. Carnal Con-
cupiscence that eats the *Flesh as it were*

Jam. 5. 3. *Fire*, will breed no other Appetite than
that which *supps with Venus*, and then

lodgeth her Guests in (1) Hell.

Prov. 7. 27. (1) That
which wic-
ked Men have in their Lusts is but like Tickling of the Itchy

Place, which leaveth more smart afterwards. *Antho. Burges. Sp.*
Refinings, part 2d. pag. 94. (miki) Fol.

So likewise the gross
 * Pleasures of Intemperance
 in the Acts of Gluttony and
 Drunkenness, as sure as
 those of Incontinency in
 the Acts of Whoredom and Fornicati-
 on, or motions towards Uncleanness, do
 hurt the Gospel-Feast. The Guests (who
 have *Animus in patinis*, their mind running
 upon Dishes, or) *whose God is their belly*,
Phil. 3. 19. (such as pour down *Mear-*
offerings and *Drink-offerings* to an Idol,
 and *serve their own Belly*) will not hasten
 after another God that hath provided
 some better Thing. The Tables that are
 full of *Vomit* have no Guests about
 them, that 'till they are *washed from their*
Filthiness, do ever sup with Christ. Sick
 Tables, *Sick with Bottles of Wine*, have
 none well enough for Him. The Guests
 at these Tables, says (m) a Writer (who
 hath pictur'd such *spotted* Beasts in their
 own Native Colours) are so many Filthy
Bruits oftentimes in the shape of Reaso-
 nable Men. Alas! these unclean Birds
 (to which they may be also compared)
 are rather for * **Carriou** upon a Dung-

* *Prov. 21. 17.* He that
 loveth Pleasure shall be a
 Poor Man. *Gaudium scilicet*
cibi & potus, voluptates
amat corporis. Mercer.

Rom. 16.
 18.
 Psa. 16. 4.
 Heb. 11. 40
 Isa. 28. 8.
 Prov. 30.
 12.

Hos. 7. 3.

(m) Mr.
Cruso. Ten-
 der Con-
 science.
 pag. 88.

* They
 are such

Beastly Creatures, 'tis a hard matter to speak of them in *cleanly* Terms.
 Sir William Waller's *Meditations*, p. 47.

hill

hill than be with the *Holy Doves* to pick up the *finest of the Wheat*. The *Swine* will not exchange their *Acorns* and their *Trough* for the greatest *Festival* in the World. Voluptuous *Epicures* had rather eat and drink of *Meats* and *Drinks* for the *Belly*, tho' to morrow they dye, than partake of *Gospel-Grace*, and live with God for ever. All Inordinacy, as a
 (n) Learned Man expresth it *in ventre & sub ventre*, whether Intemperance or Uncleanness, will make the Sensualist very sparing, and the more niggardly in the Things of God.

(n) Mr.
Sam Lee.
 Joy of
 Faith. pag.
 176, 177.

2. *Vain Pleasures* that cannot profit do render the Gospel to many ineffectual. They are *sensual Delights* and not *spiritual* (tho' men by an Art may sift them finer) which do relish with the *Carnal Gust* of Man. Some *Light Spirits* had rather feed upon *Frothy Pleasures* than the *solid Food* of Christians. A Feast for *Conversion* will be of no account with them 'till they are delivered
 1 Pet. 1. 18. from their *vain Conversation*. They that spend their *Years* in Pleasures, will account one Day at a Banquet in God's Courts a Burden. They who are given
 Isa. 47. 8. to Pleasures, like the *Chaldeans*, will not

not carry it to the Gospel-Feast as Christians. *Lovers of Pleasures*, 2 Tim. 3. 4. * The *Friends* of it will be *Enemies* * φίλοι εἰσὶν ἐχθροί. to God and his Provision for their vain Pleasure's sake. If Sinners covet to enjoy the *Pleasures of sin for a season*, they Heb. 11. 25 will cast off the Thoughts of those *Pleasures at God's Right Hand for ever*. So Psa. 16. 11. as long as they walk in the *Vanity of their Mind*, they will never pitch upon Food that shall make them more *solid*. Such *Traff* shooke into their Laps will take off their Mind from the very *Tree of Life*. Rev. 22. 2. This as to the Lust of the Flesh.

2. *The Lust of the Eyes* is a Banquet with Sinners that obstructs the Gospel-Feast. *This Lust of the*

Eye, say (o) *some*, is *Fancy*. Others do understand by it more particularly that *Piece of Concupiscence* seated in the *Eye*, which cannot be satisfied without the *Object*. *Lusts of the Eye*, because (p) the *Eye* is only satisfied with them. *Covetous-*

ness begins at the *Eye*. *Eve* had a sight of the *Tempting Object*, and then sought to embrace it. *When the Woman saw that*

(b) There are Lusts in the *Fancy*, I take it that is the meaning of *John*, 1 Joh. 2. 16. — Lust of the *Eyes*. So *Eccles.* 11. 9. *Rejoyce O young Man* (because these are fullest of *Fancy*) — and walk — in the sight of thine *Eyes*. Dr. Tho. Goodwyn. Vol. 2d. part 2d. pag. 92.

(p) *Coston* upon *John*.

that the Tree was good for Food, and that it was pleasant to the Eyes, she took of the Fruit thereof, Gen. 3. 6.

(q) *Satanas incipit ἀπὸ τοῦ ἡμελινοῦ, & successivè τὸ ἐπιθυμητικὸν & τὸ αἰσθητικὸν invade.* Jun. *Præf.* in Gen. Col. 74.

(q) The Devil first set up on her Reasonable Faculty, suggests a mighty Prerogative of Divine Empire to

the Eye of her mind, ye shall be as gods, Gen. 3. 5. knowing good and evil, and then sets up on her desiring Faculty, shews her an Apple with a Fair Skin, but a Foul Core, to delude and captivate her other Eye of Sense. And so it far'd with Achan, Josh. 7. 21. that when he saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish Garment, and two hundred shekels of Silver, and a wedge of Gold of fifty shekels weight, then he coveted them and took them. The Entertainment therefore which this Lust of the Eye finds out abroad, takes off Sinners from the Provisions of Gospel-Grace: When Men would fain fill their Belly with encrease, snatching on the Right Hand and on the Left, to gather with their Hand what a covetous Eye beholds, and greedily to hoard up what they see, they will lay up no Treasures in Heaven. Carnal Profit is a Banquet that makes the wordly Eater thereof undervalue

Mat. 19. 21

dervalue and contemn Spiritual Good.

A Poor Worldling that makes to himself a *Feast of Wealth*, could live with content tho' there were a *Famine of God's Word*: He that looks so much upon the smiles of Gain, can see no *Gain in God*.

1 Tim. 6. 6.

lineß. He that rolls the World so delightfully in his *Fancy*, will roll no other Morsel under his Tongue, than from such a Banquet as his *Fleshly Eyes* have seen. The Gospel will not fill the Heart, where it meets with an *evil Eye* that is not *fill'd with seeing*.

Ecclef. 1. 8.

3. The Pride of Life is a Banquet that obstructs the Gospel-Feast, and that *two* ways; as it puffeth up 1. With *Applause*. And, 2. With *Worldly Pomp*.

1. *As it puffs men up with Applause*. The Ambition of *Simon Magus* that would be known to be **some Body*, or, as we read it in our *Translation*, giving out that himself was *some great one*, Act.

* ὅτι τις τῶν
ἐαυτοῦ μέ-
γαν.

8. 9. is not a *Little one*, among the *Hinderances* that obstruct the Gospel-Feast from *some*. When Men affect their own *Carnal Excellencies*, they feed at *home*, and leave the Gospel-Feast to *others*. A Man's Affectation of *Carnal Praise* sets so high an Esteem upon his *own worth*,
that

that he thinks the Gospel to be *little worth* to him. Applause blows Men up

with Conceits, and instead of eating at a Feast, turns them into spiritual (r) *Chameleons*, 'till they are made as *Ephraim* that feedeth upon wind. He that lives upon this *Air*, hath a Bladder must be prick't, before he will take a *Plenteous*

Meal down. Indeeed he that lives in

Ro.n. 16. Religion upon *Good words* and *fair Speeches*, or is contented with the Commendation of a *Professor* that owns, or of a

18. *Preacher* that teacheth Christ, without

Rev. 3.20. being *in* him, and *supping with him*, is but like Him that *dines* or *sups upon the White of an Egg*, as *Job* speaks, in which he shall find *no Taste*, *Job* 6. 6. and yet He that can live upon such a *Hungry Banquet*, will despise the *Gospel-Feast*. There was an ambitious and vain-glorious Temper in the *Pharisees*, which hath left their Character upon record, *Joh. 12. 43. They loved the Praise of Men more than the Praise of God*. There is scarcely a greater Snare found to draw a Man from the *Things* of God, than an inordinate

(r) *Ephraim* pascit ventum & sequitur Eurum, *Hof. 12. 1. quo sensu homines vanos & inanes, ambitionis mancipia & vanæ Gloriæ appetentes, frivolis ac inanibus Studiis occupatos, vocamus Chameleontes, & dicimus aere antrâq; pasci*. Rivet in loc.

inordinate Affection to his own *Name*. This Ambition in *Herod* broke forth in *Blasphemy*, and made him receive such Praise of his Flatterers for an *Oration*, as was due only to God himself in the *Publishing Glad Tidings*; it is the *Voice of a god, and not of a Man*. But he that could feast upon that Blasphemous Piece of Praise, was turn'd into a vile Banquet himself, and serv'd up for *Worms*.

Luk. 1.19.
Act. 12.22.

v. 23.

2. *As it puffs Men up with Worldly Pomp and Gallantry.* The Pride of Life

in the Poms of Men (of Carnal and Earthy Affections) is an Enemy to these Provisions. Ambitious Men have a *huge* swallow for the World, but so *narrow* & one for God, that a little Religion *choaks* them.

The word *αλαζονεία*, which we render Pride of Life, signifies the Pride of *Ambition* to be raised up to Preferments, Dignity, and external Grandure; a Fastuous, aspiring Itch to climb into Honour, the Honour that cometh from Man, without any regard of God, or the *Honour* which *have all his Saints*.

Pla. 149.2.

Now when Men aim to post themselves high, and are Ambitious of Advancement into Great Places, affecting Gallantry, which is but the finest Scene of Pageantry,

- * 1 Cor. 7. Pageantry, in the * *Fashion of this world*
 31. *that passeth away*; they are got too high
 to stoop to an Entertainment where
- Jam. 4. 6. God giveth Grace unto the humble. I
 Men once get up to that which they
- Matth. 4. 5. call Church-Preferments (suppose) and
 stand upon the Pinnacle of their Temple
 they often look down with Disdain upon
 the very Bottom from whence they rise
 but with a great deal more upon the
 Provisions of the Gospel, spread they
 think so much below them upon that
- Isa. 25. 6. *Mountain of the Lord's House* near them.
 Isa. 2. 2. Worldly Pomp was ever such a pleasing
 Garnish upon this World's Dishes, that
- Mal. 1. 12. makes the Table of the Lord, and his Meat
 contemptible. When Agrippa was come,
 Act. 25. 23. and Bernice with great Pomp, (tho' it
 was but with great Phantasie (or Fancy))
 neither, the * Original faith, so little ac-
 count doth the Spirit of God make, when
 it speaks of the Great Things of Man)
 the Gospel doth not signifie much to ei-
 ther of these two. Festus shining in
 Pomp and Purple at the Bench, laughs
 the Gospel to scorn, while Paul in re-
 lating his Conversion, gives them some
 account of it; he could not forbear the
 laying open of his contemptible Thoughts
 towards

* μετὰ πολ-
 λὴν φαντα-
 σιν.

towards the Gospel in the midst of the open Court, but cries out, that all Men might hear, *Paul, thou art beside thyself, much Learning doth make thee mad, Act.* 26. 24. See now what a Hinderance to the Gospel this Worldly Grandure was in the way of *the most Noble Festus*: *Act. 26. 25.* He hath too big a Name, and Titles too high and gallant to stoop and submit to a Gospel that knock'd Paul down: This as to *Festus*. And we shall see *Agrippa* too, that seems to be carried away with the Pomp of the World *least*, yet but *almost perswaded*, V. 28. *Almost thou perswadest me to be a Christian.* Oh! this decking, this garnishing, this Glory of the out-side, dazles the Eyes of Flesh, they can see no Feast besides. *The All Things* look very despicable with *Them* in the presence of these (*f*) *Nothings set astrut*. Alas! if there be no more in it but such Bravery as is used in decking the more *uncomely part*, the Body, it makes up such a gaudy Banquet of the Pride of Life for Ambition to feed upon, as hinders the Reception of a better Entertainment. Thus I have spoken of that Hinderance to the Feast of the Gospel from *other Banquets* which

R

are

(*f*) Bp.
Hopkins's
Sermon at
the Funer.
of Algernon
Grevill.
pag. 75.

1 Cor. 12.
23.

Jude 7. 12. are *Spots in Feasts*, and to Sinners will spoil the Feast where *no Spot* is. To conclude it, they breed such *Worms* in the Mind, as first take away the *Appetite* to Food, and then gnaw out the *Entrails*.

6 Hindran. Sixthly, *A Conceit of Self-Fulness*. This lyes rather *inwardly* in a Proud Mind under Concealment, than in the Pride of Life *outwardly*. It is when a Man will not be emptyed of his *own* to receive of *Christ's Fulness*, nor throw out the *Puddle-water* to fill up the Vessel with *New Wine*. Self-Fulness is a Hinderance to the *Feast of Fat Things*. There is in *some*, a *Tumor Cerebri*, as Bishop Reynolds calls it (t) a *Learned Pride*, when Men's Acquirements are risen to such a Pitch, that they are too full to admit of any saving Knowledge of Jesus Christ or his Gospel. If the Brain swells with the numerous Volumes of some Heathen Philosophers; nay, if it be only with some lesser Systems and Maxims of Philosophy, it may grow too big for the Gospel, and make a vain Philosopher imagine that the Truths of both the *Testaments* may be crowded into as small a compass, as one did of *Homer's Iliad's*,
that

(t) Of the
Passions,
pag. 159.
4to. (mibi.)

that thought they might be contained in a *Nut-shell*. • But these Men's *Brains* swell, and a *Crown of Glory* would be thought too little to suit with their great *Heads*.

There is also in others a *Tumor Cordis*, a *Religious Pride* that swells them at the *Heart*, and puffs them up with a Conceit of a Self Righteousness, 'till they grow too big to enter in at the *Strait Gate*, or get in at *Christ's Table*; see *Matt. 7. 13.* *Rom. 10. 3.* ——— Going about to establish their own Righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the Righteousness of God. *Have not submitted.*] The Translation is in the *Active Voice*, but the Original is *Passive*, different from the word by which *We* render it, * they * ἐκ ὑμῶν τὰ ἡμέτερα were not laid in order. Self-Fulness swells Men so big, that it puts them out of their place, disorders them, that 'till they are laid in order, and in their Right Mind again, Gospel-Provisions will be very ineffectual. Men that have enough of their own, do not use to buy, they live upon their *Stock*, while others go to *Market*. The full Soul loaths the *Honey-comb*, *Prov. 27. 7.* He mocks at it, say he * Septuagint, and scorns a Dainty * ἐμυδάσκει *Morsel*

Morsel offer'd. A Sinner's full Stomach turns at any Feast provided. If he doth not Vomit up the sweet Morsel he hath eaten, and be empty'd of all his Self-Excellency, Wisdom, Righteousness, Strength, and seem so little that he is nothing in his own Eyes, the Provisions of the Gospel will ('till then) be all nothing with him. In a word, so long as a Man can eat and drink at his own Charges, he will scorn to depend upon any other Table: And as long as the Soul thinks it self fed well enough already, it will hearken the less to Christ to come in and sup with Him. *

7 Hindran.

Seventhly, *The Cares of this Life* Worldlings plant such a *Brake of Thorns* in their way, that do hedge them out of God's *Pasture*; they are afraid of the *True Bread*, lest they should lose other *Loaves* for it. When Christ comes to be propounded to them, they have thousand carking, tormenting Thoughts that rend and tear their minds from him, when they make any offers to come down with him: *What shall we eat? what shall we drink? or wherewithall shall we be clothed?* how shall the Family be maintained, and the Year brought about

Mat. 6. 31.

about? these Things therefore leave a Gap in their Soul, which 'till made up, but not with their *Thorns in the Flesh*, will keep Christ and their distant Hearts from uniting. *Jesus answered, and said unto Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many Things*, Luk. 10. 41. The word is, thou art *Divided* in thy ^{*μεμιχράς.} Thoughts, and knowest not which of thy Matters to unite and fix them on. *Μεμιχράς*, Cares, are Divisions of the ^{†μεμιχράς, παρὰ τὸ μελεῖν τὸν ἑαυτὸν.} Mind, that make it anxious and Doubtful where to settle, or what to take up withall. Thus is it in *Religion*, the Things of God are Preached unto Carnal Men, the Thoughts of the World it may be for the present are just laid asleep, and the Word knocks up Conscience, which being awak'd for the present in a calm alone without other interruptions, listens to Gospel-Truth, hears it, and in the Hearing a little outwardly approves it, insomuch that the Mind is divided between God and the World, and grows anxious which side to choose; but alas! the mischief is, that their Hearts had been sown before with a Field full of Worldly Cares, just ready to spring up fresh after the Word falls, and im-

mediately all Thoughts of Faith and Fellowship with *Christ* are *choakt*, the Man reverts, his earthly Heart tumbles to his Centre, and instead of a *new creature* to live upon this Feast, becomes the carking Earthly, old Man agen. *He that receiveth the seed among the Thorns is he that beareth the Word, and the Care of this World, and the Deceitfulness of Riches choke the Word, and he becometh unfruitful,* Matth. 13. 22. Worldlings have their Hearts and their Hands both full of *Dirt*, and have no room for any *Dish* of God's either. Should they *put off* the World a little, yet it will return, it will follow them into the very Assemblies of God's People, and in a Crowd find 'em out. And alas! a Happy Meeting! they know not how to be so unkind to the World as to chide it home again: If such Men look a little out towards God, their Dear Idols come weeping about them and are presently enough to break their Heart to leave them. * Men's Carefulness in the Things of the World is their Hinderance in all the Gospel brings.

Eighthly, *Slothfulness*. This is also a Fault that will do the Feast hurt. Many would like the Provisions of the Gospel

* *O curvae
in Terras
anima, &
inanes coe-
lestium!*
Persius.

8 Hindran.

spel better, if like *Tamar's* couple of Cakes which she dress'd for *Amnon*, they might be brought to them *into their Chamber*, while they are lying upon a *Bed of Sluggishness*, as he was upon a *Bed of Lust*. 2 Sam. 13. 5. 6.

Nature, saith (u) one, would have Heaven come *sleeping* to us in our Beds. A Sinner may seem occasionally to run after the Gospel, like a Man that hunts for *Venison*, yet what doth it profit him, if he be like *Solomon's* slothful Man, *Prov.*

12. 27. that roasteth not that which he taketh in hunting? I mean, if he be loth to take Pains diligently to apply or practise the Word he went so hastily forth to hear? if he grows too lazy to *lay up* some special Truth he hears, he *lays out* all his mighty Pains in vain. What Good will the Dainties of the Gospel do him, so long as he (w) folds up his

Arms like the Sluggard, and will be at no spiritual Pains to pick up the Mortal ready carved to him? *A slothful Man hideth his Hand in his Bosom, and will not*

so much as bring it to his mouth again, *Prov. 19. 24. So Prov. 26. 15. The slothful Man hideth his Hand in his Bosom, it*

grieveth him to bring it again to his mouth: e. He had rather to indulge his Laziness,

He had rather to indulge his Laziness,

He had rather to indulge his Laziness,

He had rather to indulge his Laziness,

(u) *Rutherford's Letters, p. 244.*

(w) *Videtur ad gestum desideriorum alacritudine, quibus ferè mos est manum in sinum aut maneam inferre, aut sub axilla tenere. Cartwright in loc.*

ness, sit and *look on* than *eat*. So it is a Hinderance to the Gospel when Men choose rather barely to *profess* it, than be at any Pains to *profit* by one Discourse of the Grace of God they hear.

9 Hindran.

Ninthly, *Prejudice*. That is, a Fore-judging of *Things* or *Persons*, as if Men were resolv'd to *condemn* the **Cause**, before they have *heard* or *try'd* it. Men are often angry with a *Party*, or with a *Person*, and will reject the *Truth*, tho' they are convinc'd it *is* the *Truth*, meerly because it comes by such *Instruments*, or such means as they have got a Prejudice against. A wicked *Ahab* did believe *Micaiah* a better Prophet than those at *Ramoth-Gilead*, and able to inform him truly touching the Success of the War between *Syria* and *Israel*, but he values neither *Micaiah's* Abilities in the Spirit of Prophecie, nor yet his Honesty in prophelying *Truth*, because he hates him, *1 Kings 22. 7, 8*. And *Jehoshaphat* said, *Is there not here a Prophet of the Lord besides, that we might enquire of him? And the King of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat, there is yet one man (Micaiah the Son of Imlah) by whom we may enquire of the Lord, but I hate him, for he doth*

not Propheſie good concerning me, but evil. God's *Elijah's* would take their Food, tho' God ſhould ſend a *Raven* to them with it, but the Prejudic'd *Ahab's* of the World will not meddle with Their's tho' *Elijah* himſelf brought it. The Goſpel is ineffectual to many by reaſon of Prejudice.

Tenthly, *The General Diſeſteem which the Goſpel meets with in the World.* The World represents God's *Morſels*, as they will one Day find their own *Sauce*, ſowre. They account it a melancholy and uncomfortable Entertainment, Religion is a Diet that will imbitter all their Portion in this Life. They think the Guests that partake of this Supper, (*i. e.* Separated, Holy Chriſtians) are every one of them like Him in the Book of *Job*, that *dyeth in the Bitterneſs of his Soul, and never eateth with Pleaſure.* They cry it up and down in the Streets of *Aſkelon*, that the Ordinances and Appointments of Jeſus Chriſt are *Veſſels in which is no pleaſure.* The Fare of the Goſpel is represented by them like *John Baптиſt's* in the Wilderneſs, as *Locuſts and wild Honey.* Thus, its Proviſions have got an ill Name by ſome, and they will not

1 Kings
17. 6.

10 Hinde-
rance.

Job 21. 15

2 Sam. 1.
20.

Hof. 8. 8.

Mat. 3. 4.

not be drawn by the very *savour* of
 Song 1. 3. *Christ's Ointments*, so long as this low
 repute it hath in the World, doth cast
 in *Dead Flies* among it, *Eccles. 10. 1.*
Dead Flies cause the Ointment of the Apo-
thecary to send forth a stinking savour.
 The Grace of God is not courteously
 received, but treated ill, tho' it comes

Luk. 2. 14. with *good will to Men.* The Dishes of
 the Gospel by an unthankful, unholy
 World, are much *cryed down*, and there-
 fore when *served up* are generally much
set by, *Acts 28. 22.* *As concerning this*
Seēt, we know that every where it is spo-

* *Τὸ αἰρε-*
σως τού-
τῆς. *ken against. This Seēt.]* * This *Heresie*,
 saith the Greek. The World concludes
 it Heresie, and therefore will not re-
 gard it, tho' it be the Gospel with the

1 Pet. 1. 12.
 middle pt. *Holy Ghost sent down from Heaven.* Wic-
 ked Men will *Nick-name* God's Truth,
 and then fly from the Truth for the ve-
 ry *Name's sake* they gave it. They en-
 tertain Bad Conceptions of the Truths
 of God, and are become *Judges of Evil*

Jam. 2. 4. *Thoughts*, and therefore reproach and
 trample upon good Things under them.
 The World imagine *Fish* to be *Serpents*,
 and then fly from them, as *Moses* did,
 Exod. 4. 3. when he *cast his Rod upon the Ground,*
 and

and while it became a Serpent, fled from before it. A vile and a scornful Generation do esteem of the Bread of Life as Stones. Oh! it is a mighty Hinderance to their embracing the Gospel of Christ, that when *his Oxen and his Fatlings* are Mat. 22. 4. killed, they take up these Spiritual Mysteries with no more regard, than if it were but the slaying of *Pharaoh's lean Kine*: But no matter to God's Children Gen. 41. 3, 19. what such insinuate, that *prate with malicious words*, the Children must take their Bread, tho' Dogs bark, and an Enemy calls it *Poison*. I confess this (saith Paul) that after the way which they call Heresie, Act. 24. 14. so worship I the God of my Fathers.

Eleventhly, *Bad Company*. If a Man 11 Hinderance. had some *Towardsly Inclinations* to embrace the Gospel, yet so long as he goeth in Company with the workers of Iniquity, he will not be able when these Sinners entice him, to consent not, Prov. 1. 16. *Certain Lewd Fellows of the baser sort do often set upon a Man that is otherwise soberly inclined, even as they assaulted the House of Jason, Acts 17. 5.* and never leave till they have worn out his Sober Impressions, that you can read nothing at last but the Devil's Brand upon him.

Exo. 23. 2. him. When Men follow a multitude to do
 Psa. 42. 4. evil, they care not to walk unto God's
 House in any other Company. The Gospel
 1 Tim. 1. 17 of the only wise God, signifies nothing to
 Prov. 13. 20 a Companion of Fools that shall be destroy-
 Psa. 119. 61. ed. The Bands of the wicked will rob thee
 of the Feast, if thou art not one that hast
 Eph. 5. 11. no Fellowship with them.

12 Hinde- Twelfthly, Carnal Relations. If there
 rance. were neither Adversary, nor evil occur-
 rent abroad, yet if a Man's Enemies be
 the Men of his own House, Mic. 7. 6. and
 a Man's Foes be those of his own Household,
 Matth. 10. 36. there is such a Radical
 Enmity in the corrupt mind of Man a-
 gainst the Truth of God, as will make
 their Eye Evil, and their Hand severe
 towards their own Flesh and Blood.
 They will violate the Bonds of Nature
 to fight against Grace. Now this is
 enough without Special Grace that opens
 the Heart, to keep the Gospel and its
 Provisions wholly out of Doors. Men
 will often hearken to the Voice of their
 own Flesh and Blood, when a Stranger
 they will not follow. Abaziah hearkens to
 Joh. 10. 5. the pernicious Advice of his Mother Atha-
 liah, for his Mother Athaliah was his
 Counsellor to do evil, 2 Chro. 22. 3. Car-
 nal

nal Relations will sometimes be very earnest to beat off young Beginners, that they may not take up with the New Man, tho' perhaps assaulting them with that old Argument, that none of their Kindred are called by it, *Luk. 1. 61. There is none of thy Kindred that is called by this Name.* You may be beaten off by such as are related to you, if you be not related as *Sons and Daughters* 2 Cor. 6. 18 to the Lord Almighty.

Thirteenthly, *False Teachers.* A corrupt Ministry sets the World against the Truth. Unsound Teachers are against Salt, because they have lost its savour. Mar. 9. 50. Men's Lyes to make the very Truths of God of no effect with some. When Sinners are beguiled, and thro' the craft and sleight of cunning Men mis-led, their Eph. 4. 14. Minds will be corrupted from the simplicity 2 Cor. 11. 3 of the Gospel; if they hearken to such as are not Teachers of good things, they will Tit. 2. 3. not value the Gospel that hath all good things ready. If they regard vain Talkers and Deceivers (as the Apostle calls corrupt Doctors) *Tit. 1. 10. Teaching things which they ought not,* v. 11. it will hinder the Advantage of Gospel-Grace provided. If there be * False Teachers among

13 Hindrance.

* ψδδδδδ-
δδ θαλδδ.

among you, 2 *Pet.* 2. 1. it will greatly
 Eph. 4. 21 damage your receiving *the Truth* as it
 is in *Jesus*. These have a beguiling Ar-
 tifice to lay their *varnish* upon the worst
 Complexion'd *Face*, and for a well-fa-
 Gen. 29. vour'd *Rachel* bring in a *Leah* that is
 23, 25. blear-ey'd. They wash over a little *false*
Coin in Doctrine; and then put it off to
 such as cannot *try the Spirits*, 1 *Joh.*
 4. 1.

14 Hinde- Fourteenthly, *Scandals in Professors*.
 rance. When such as *sit at Meat* do prophane
 Mal. 1. 12. *the Table of the Lord*, it makes others
 * *Panis* even trample upon the Lord's * *Shew-*
Propositio- bread. Tho' you offer and propound
nis will be Holy Things to them, they will oppose
 quickly themselves, if they can find but any
oppositio- *Stain* dropt upon our Garments at this
 also. Holy *Feast*; I mean any thing in the
 World which they see by *Us*, to deride
 a Love-Feast, and reproach the Gospel
 for. The World doth not look so much
 upon *Religion*, pure and undefiled, as up-
 on him that *seemeth to be Religious*. Nei-
 Jam. 1. 27. ther is the *Holiness* so much talk'd of as
 v. 26. the *Spot of God's Children*: Their *acerba*
 Deut. 32. 5. *Ingenia*, as the (x) Learned *Calvin* calls
 (x) *Instit.* them, their sharp or sower Wits will try
 Chr. Rel. fol. 284. at an Advantage to render our *Feast*
 Sect. 11. (nibi) 8°. high-

high-seasoned, and then in our Thirst their Mockery will give us *Vinegar* to drink. We therefore who profess the Gospel had need be cautious, that we be *without offence unto the day of Christ*, and not keep others from the Provisions at God's Table, because of *our Sin that lyeth at the Door*.

Psa. 69. 21.

Phil. 1. 10

Gen. 4. 7.

Fifteenthly, *Carnal Disappointment*. Men come forth (it may be) expecting to meet with *one* thing, and lo ! in the Gospel they find quite *another*. They get out at the Rumour of a *Feast*, thinking to meet with some Dainty *Morsel* ready, and alas ! when they come they meet with nothing which a Carnal Palate likes, but with a Dish their Corruption can in no wise relish. It is a Feast where neither the Meat nor Drink doth please them. They bring so many *Nice* Corruptions to the Well-Head of Life, that the Living Water is worse than *brackish* to them : It grows as bitter to their Taste, as if that *Star* in the *Revelation*, whose Name is *Wormwood*, had fallen into the Waters, and made them the Waters of *Marah*, where such as they come. They find the Gospel brings no such Tidings to their Ears,

15 Hindrance.

Rev. 8. 11.

as

as they are hearkning after. — No such Things as I supposed, saith Festus in Paul's Accusation, Acts 25. 18, 19. But certain Questions of their own Superstition, and of one Jesus which was Dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive. Alas! such a Disappointment spoils their Approbation of the Gospel, and puts them out of Love with its Provisions (it may be) ever after. They come perhaps for the Preacher to scratch an itching Ear, but are cut to the Heart (like Stephen's Hearers that gnasht upon him with their Teeth) and go away with their Consciences in the mean while accusing them.

Aa. 7. 54.

Rom. 2. 15.

16 Hindrance.

Sixteenthly, Plain Dealing. They think the Truths of the Gospel are too keen, and they should better savour them, if the Morfels were not so often dipt in Vinegar; or if it were a Passover made ready without any Bitter Herbs. Herod heard John Baptist gladly, and seem'd to like the Feast well, 'till he met with that Biting-grain of Mustard-seed, *It is not lawful for thee to have thy Brother's Wife*, Mark 6. 18, 20. compared: And we never read afterwards that Herod would endure to come and Dine or Supper with John again. He met with God's

Exo. 12. 8.

Hook

Hook that prickt him, and being never in earnest, was resolv'd to play no more with the *Bait*. When Men bring their Lusts unto Christ to feed, Sinners find themselves mistaken in their Aim; and so long as they resolve to continue in their *sins*, they shall find it to be a *Banquet* that affords not a *Bone* for any sin to pick.

Seventeenthly, Sometimes *open Persecution* is a Hinderance to the Entertainment. They are afraid of the Gospel, when God's *Shew-bread* and *Goliath's Sword* are coupled. When God's *House* is beset, Sinners for Refuge will flee far enough from his *Table*. They care not to be found within, when there is a *Judas* without, and with him a great multitude from the chief Priests with Swords and Staves for to take them. A Persecuted and a *Professed Subjection to Christ* with them will not stand together. If there be not *Liberty* from Men, they will renounce God's *Liberalty*; for when *Affliction* or *Persecution* ariseth for the *Word's sake*, immediately they are offended, Mark 4. 17. whereas it is a Character of the Saints of the most High, that *being persecuted they suffer it*, 1 Cor. 4. 12. last words.

17 Hinderance.

1 Sam. 22. 13.

Mat. 26. 47

2 Cor. 9. 13

S

Lastly,

18 Hind-
rance.

Lastly, God's *Righteous Induration*, his *hardning* and *giving Sinners up judicially*. They are first *obstinate*, and then God is *just*. On Their Parts it is a contracted *Obstinacy*, on His a judicial *Obduration*. They are *Haters of God*, Rom. 1. 30. and then (saith He) my Soul loathed them; as Zech. 11. 8. *My Soul loathed Them, and their Soul also abhorred Me*. Sinners Discover an *Aversion* to God, and God manifests an *Induration* towards Them: They will not be *softened*, and he will leave them *hardened*. When Men despise the *Fatness* of God's House, he suffers such a *gross Fatness* to grow at last upon their *Hearts*, that they cannot *understand with their Heart*, and be *Converted*. Now will not this be a *Hinderance* to purpose, when Men have *Eyes* to see the Provision, and yet God is so wroth with them they shall not see, or regard one Dish before them? and when they have *Ears* to hear, and yet they shall not hear and understand one word of Grace and Good Will to Men spoken? Joh. 12. 39, 40. *Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, he hath blinded their Eyes, and hardened their Heart, that they should not see with*

Isa. 6. 10.

Luk. 2. 14.

with their Eyes, nor understand with their Heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. This Hardness is Originally from themselves, 'tis their own voluntary Work to contract the sin, and 'tis God's judicial Act to inflict the Punishment, and give them up to augment it. Indeed God doth not infuse a *Positive* Hardness, by shedding abroad any malignant Influences of a hardening Nature, but he hardens by a pure *Privation*, i. e. He doth not infuse Evil, but with-holds the Good he is not bound to give, and a Man's Heart will then as naturally grow hard, as *Metals* that are taken off the Fire. So much for the First Branch of Hinderances, which obstruct *Sinners*, and render this Gospel-Feast of no more use to them.

Secondly, The Hinderances of *Saints*, which render this Feast of the Gospel so ineffectual to some of them (I mean as to the Comfort and Quietude of their State) are chiefly these *Four*. II.

1. *Dissatisfaction about their Relation to God, and Right to this Feast.* They are not satisfied whether God is their Father, and that makes them thrive no better by any *Children's Bread*. They Mat. 13. 25

question their *Right*, and dare not make an Application of the *Promises*, because
 chap. 21. 23 they know not *by what Authority* they can do these things: They fear the Feast doth not belong to *them*, but is appointed and decreed for *others*, for whom
 Mat. 20. 23 (*alone*, they think) *it is prepared*. A Saint may be ready to interpret Christ's words *absolutely*, *thou hast no part with me*, which yet he lays down no more than *Conditionally*, [*If I wash thee not*] *thou hast no part with me*, Joh. 13. 8. They query, what if they should be *Dogs*, to whom it doth not appertain to take the *Children's Bread*? but alas! why should this hinder or discourage you? it did not the Woman of *Canaan*, tho' Christ call'd her *Dog* expressly, *Matth. 15. 26. It is not meet to take the Children's Bread, and cast it to Dogs*; as if he had said, the *Bread* of the House is too good for such a *Dog* as thee: But this Woman still comes in with a reply of *Faith*, and seeing good store of Provision in Christ, tho' she were not a *Jew* by Birth, but a *Syro-phenician* by Nation, *Mark 7. 26.* yet she would not give over, or be content to lose all: If she were a *Dog*, she would plead with Christ
 for

for *Crumbs*, and gather her *Meat* under his *Table*, v. 27th. and she said, *Truth Lord, yet the Dogs eat of the Crumbs which fall from their Master's Table*; inasmuch that Jesus now tells her she was no *Dog*, but a *Daughter* of the true Faith of *Abraham*, v. 28. Then Jesus answered and said unto her, *O Woman! great is thy Faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt*: As if he had said, thou hast been suing for *Crumbs*, but now thou mayst take what *Meat* thou wilt.

Judg. 7. 1.

2. *Unacquaintedness with the True Notion of the Gospel*. They want *Light*, and therefore walk in *Darkness*. They look more to *Qualifications* for *Christ*, than to *Christ* for *Qualifications*. They would gain see more *Works* in *themselves* before they dare venture to rely on *Him*. But my Brethren, tho' we apprehend never so much unworthiness, guilt, pollution and misery in our *selves*, yet our work is to come to *Jesus Christ* as we are, that *in* him and *from* him we may be made *better*: For, if you try to place your own *Obedience* in the *Front*, and Faith in *Jesus Christ* at the *Foot* of the account afterwards, that is, you would strive to such a pitch of *Holiness*, to such

a measure of Sincerity, to such a Degree of Brokenness, to so much *Fruitfulness in every good word and work*, and then you could safely rest on Christ; alas! this is to put a *Nought* in the first place, and then a *Figure* in the next; for it is impossible to arrive unto any Degree of *acceptable* Obedience, 'till Faith closeth with him, who is the ground of all acceptation, *This is my Beloved Son in whom I am well pleased*, Matth. 3. 17. — *He hath made us accepted in the Beloved*, Eph. 1. 6. There is by Faith an antecedent Union to, and a Being in Christ as the Foundation of all our acceptance with the Father, which I seriously profess was the sweet and prevailing Allurement when the Spirit of God enlightned me in this part of the Gospel, and wrought with a Divine Power, to bring me to give up my self as a *Sinner* to believe in him, having been long while *deluded* by this Fatal and pernicious Mistake, that I must be first a *Saint*, and then might set up for a *Believer*. But let none from hence misunderstand me, to plead for a vain Faith which never joyns with *Holiness*: I speak only of the order, to shew where Holiness

must be plac'd, not against the *thing*, as prophane *Libertines* do, to exclude it out of all place. If we look first to *Christ*, and then to *Holiness*, we need not, as some weak Believers are apt under Temptation and the Hidings of the Face of God, to question our *State*, while we bewail a Body of Death; because our *Justification*, as soon as by Faith we first received *Christ*, brought us into a *Complete State*, tho' it hath not brought us, nor will in this Life, to perfect *Degrees of Holiness*. But if we are *preposterous*, and look first to such measures of *Holiness*, and then in the second place look to *Christ*, we overturn all the order of the Gospel, which placeth *Christ*, or Faith in *Christ*, at the *beginning*, and then *Holiness* immediately to be carrying on gradually to our last end. It is as much *Satan's Art* on *one Hand* to trouble Souls that have been awakened, by separating *Christ from Holiness*, as it is the industrious Art of some Men to separate *Holiness from Christ*. The Devil accuseth us, because we are not perfect in *our selves*, and become our own *Saviours*; others accuse us, because being perfect in a *Saviour*, we will yet

Phil. 3. 14. talk of *pressing towards the Mark*, and
 2Pet. 3. 18. *growing in Grace and Holiness*; as if Men
 in Christ were to make the Church a
 Monster, that is, a *Holy Head*, and pro-
 phane *Filthy Members*; therefore say
 some, who I am sure have not learnt
 the Truth as it is in Christ, there is no
 need of an *Evangelical Righteousness*,
 when we are found in *Christ's Righte-*
ousness, no need of *our Obedience*, poor,
 imperfect, rotten, because of Christ's
 which is absolutely *compleat* and spotless;
 Alas! this is no more than to tell us,
 because we are not *justified* by Holiness,
 therefore we must not *labour* after Holi-
 ness, nor *pray* for Holiness, nor *look* for
 Holiness, nor *preach* up Holiness: I would
 fain know why our Holiness on *Earth*
 should impair Christ's Righteousness more
 than our Holiness shall do in *Heaven*?
 for we shall there in Person be Holy to
 Perfection, and yet have nothing, after
 we have been millions of Years thus Ho-
 ly, but all of it *for* and *in Christ*. Now,
 how can an *incompleat* Holiness that be-
 fore must be justified it self by Christ,
 injure Christ's Righteousness on Earth,
 when our *perfect* and Angelical Obedi-
 ence in *Heaven* shall not diminish or
 eclipse

eclipse one Ray of this *Sun of Righteous-* Mal. 4. 22
ness to all Eternity? But to return, and

in a few words close this Hinderance to
 the Feast, in reference to such as err
 about Holiness and Obedience in the *mis-*
placing it, as I began the *particular*. Let

Christians take heed *where* they place
 Faith, for if they do not *begin* with it,
 they will put that, and Christ's Merits,
 and their own Obedience too all *out of*
place. It is an excellent Passage to this

purpose which I have met with in a
 Divine that hath also wrote very found-
 ly an entire Piece upon the Point of Ju-
 stification; saith he, in another (y) Trea- (y) *Antho.*
 tise, "As in the Holy of Holies every *Burgess,*
 "thing was Gold, or covered with Gold, *Spiritual*
 "so all that is accepted with God, is *Refinings,*
 "either Christ, or Duties covered with *1st. part.*
 "Christ. Again, that you may not en- *p. 249.*

tertain a wrong Notion of the Gospel,
 take heed, that in your view of *sin*, you
 do not spy out more in your own *Ini-*
quities than you do in the very Grace of

God, to *receive you graciously*, and *love*
you freely: And beware that you do not
 fancy a deeper Red (different from other

Death-colours) in your own *Body of*
Death, than is seen in the *Blood of Jesus*
Christ.

Hos. 14. 3. &

Christ. An Unacquaintedness with the true Notion of the Gospel is a Hindrance to the Gospel-Feast.

3. *Remaining Unbelief in the Actings of slavish Fear.* *Reigning* Unbelief indeed is the Property of *Sinners*, but *Remaining* Unbelief is a great Hindrance hanging in the way of *Saints*. There are *Remnants* of this Sin to bring you under spiritual *Sickness* and *Infirmities*, when there be no *Ruling* Signs that it is unto *Death* upon you. There is much *Fluctuation* in our Hearts, an unsteady rolling too and fro like the Waves of the *Sea*, sometimes carried out towards the Shore in *Hope*, then driven back again to Sea in *Fears*, whereas our *Rock* is the same for ever, tho' we roll aside. Oh! were our Faith (says (2) one) as *firm*, as our State in Christ is secure, what manner of Men should *We* be! A Saint may be brought *many* ways *low*, but he shall be brought *no* ways *under*. Now by how much the less it is you *live* in the Exercise of Faith, *i. e.* By the Faith of the Son of God, by so much the less in your spiritual State will you *thrive* by Gospel-Grace. As you want any measure of Faith to digest the Food of God's Word,

(2) Dr.
Sibbs,
Bruised
Reed, p.
23, 24.

Gal. 2. 20.

Word, so much the less of Nourishment and Sweetness you will find in any morsel of it. *Jesus said unto him, if thou canst believe, All Things are possible unto him that believeth*, Mark 9. 23. If you have not, Oh weak Christians, a stronger Degree, a higher Measure of Faith, your Fears will make you jealous, and suspect the Love of God every time you try to eat and drink in his Kingdom. It is observed of *Peter*, he never sank in the *Waters*, 'till he sank first in *Fears*; when he saw the Wind boisterous he was afraid, and upon this followeth his *beginning to sink*, Matth. 14. 30. Fears will suggest nothing but such wrong and uncomfortable Thoughts as these; Well, this Feast of the Gospel is too great for such poor *Dust*, and too good for so vile a *Worm* as I, therefore it belongeth not to me. But Oh! take heed of this, let not Unbelief carry it without a check in thy Soul, when it calls the *Bread of Life* *Poyson*, or tells thee, thou art *damn'd*, if thou venturest so far as to meddle with it.

4. *Lastly, Refusing to be Comforted.* God's People sometimes will not, tho' we take his own words, be satisfied. The
Con-

- Job 15. 11 *Consolations of God are so small with them,*
 Jer. 16. 11. *that they will not take this Cup of Con-*
solation down, Psa. 77. 2. last words. My
Soul refused to be comforted, let me hear
what I would, it was all one with me.
That was Good Asaph's case a while.
Now what will All Things avail, when
no thing shall be allow'd to comfort you,
but you will choose to go down into the
 Gen. 37. 35 *Grave mourning? What signifies Moses*
to tell the Children of Israel, that God
had looked upon their Affliction and Bon-
dage, and to assure them of Deliverance,
 Mat. 24. 33 *that it was now even at the Door, when-*
as they hearkened not unto Moses for An-
guish of Spirit, and for cruel Bondage?
Exod. 6. 9. It is observable indeed, that
at the first Newes of their Deliverance,
which Moses brought them from God,
they are hugely affected with it, Chap.
4. 31. The People believed, and when they
heard that the Lord had visited the Children
of Israel, and that he had looked upon their
Affliction, then they bowed their Heads, and
worshipped: Oh! how glad and comfort-
ed do they seem that there comes any
Relief to alter their Afflicted case at last!
Well, but God will yet try their Pati-
ence under their Burdens and Adversity

a little longer ; in the next Chapter *Pharaoh* comes, and He *multiplies* their Burdens still more and more, and lo ! now the *Double Labour* of their Bricks and the Stripes of their Task-masters upon their Backs, beat them quite out of Heart ; in-
 so-much that at last *Moses* with all his Arguments and Perswasion could no ways still them ; for they are resolved to hear, to wait, to trust no longer ; *they hearkened not, &c.*

Thus, some of God's Children will seem to be born up notably, when God comes first into their Souls with Comfort ; but alas ! if God, to try them, lays them again *in the lowest Pit, in Darkeness*, Psa. 88. 6.
in the Deeps, immediately their Mountain is overturned, their Sun is set, and the Rainbow of the Covenant blotted out of Their Cloud. They refuse to be comforted, and seem loth to look out towards the Everlasting Hills again. Now hence it Psa. 121. 1.
 is that the Gospel hath been very often (in part) ineffectual (for a Time) to some of God's own Children. To conclude therefore in a word, your Meat will not strengthen you to flee as a Bird Psa. 11. 1.
to your Mountain, so long as with Ephraim you remain a silly Dove without Heart,
 Hof.

Hof. 7. 11. And so much for the *Doctrinal* Part.

IX. The **Ninth** and last Thing propounded in the General method was the *Application* of this Doctrine. The *Uses* I design to make (by God's further Assistance) are the *Three* following, *Information*, to discover such *Truths*, *Humiliation*, to bewail such *Sins*, and *Exhortation*, to persuade to such *Duties* as naturally flow from it.

I. *Use.* First, by way of *Information*, in these *Thirteen Particulars*.

I. *Inf.* 1. We may learn the *Fitness* of *Earthly Comparisons* to bring down Heavenly Truths to our *Capacities*. I say, the *Fitness* of *Earthly Comparisons*, for in this Body of *Flesh* we have more *Earth* than *Spirit*, and need to put on *Spectacles* to help our *weak Eyes*. It is a piece indeed of condescending Workmanship in our Maker, to blow up the very *Earth* and the Things of it into a *Glass*, and then shew us Heaven and the Things thereof thro' it; which made the Apostle use the same *Metaphor*, when he was comparing the Knowledge of Believers here with that perfect Sight they should have in Heaven.

Heaven, 1 Cor. 13. 12. Now we see thro' a Glass darkly, but then Face to Face. Thus the Holy Ghost declares, I have used Similitudes by the Ministry of the Prophets,

Hos 12. 10. (a) When God speaks to instruct us in his Word, he doth as it were transform himself, not speaking according to his own Essential Majesty, but agreeably to the measure of our Frailty.

(a) Deus se quodammodo transformat in verbo suo, in quo non loquitur pro sua Majestate; sed prout congruere videt modulo nostro, & infirmitati. Rivet. in loc. Vol. 2. p. 774. Col. 2. ultim. Obs.

The Scripture often instructs us in Metaphors, and sets forth our State, Privileges and Duty by them. It was Christ's frequent way of Teaching, who was the Luk. 1. 76.

Prophet of the Highest, but used * Similitudes as well as the Prophets of the Old Testament. The Master when he taught his Disciples, did point to the Things that are not seen by a Figure from those that are.

* Similitudes may be Preacht out of God's Word, according to the Scope wherein the Similitude holds. Vines, God's drawing and Man's coming, pag. 25.

He did oftner open his mouth in Parables, than express the Kingdom of God other ways; as particularly, we may see in the Text and Context, where the Kingdom of God (that is the Church of God) is likened to a certain King that made a marriage for his Son, or to a certain man that made

Matth. 13. 35.

Mat. 22.2.

Luk. 14. 16. *made a great Supper, and bade many, and*
 Ver. 17. *then sent forth his Servant at Supper-Time*
to say to them that are bidden, Come. There
are many Similitudes, Parables and Fi
gures in the Book of God, taken from
things below, that do all tend to se
forth our Priviledges, and the Riches o
the Grace of God to us. To conclude i
therefore, let our Adversaries tell us, we
embrace (b) a few gaudy Metaphors, ye
we judge it very allowable, being justifi
ed by the General current of Scripture
to use such as (c) carry a due Proportion
Analogy and Similitude to the Things they
are brought to illustrate.

(b) Parker,
 Eccles. Po-
 lity, p. 75.

(c) R. Fer-
 guson, Im-
 port and
 Use of Scri-
 pture Me-
 taphors,
 pag. 296.

2 Inf.

2. If, under these Metaphors, there
 be a Plentiful Store of all Provisions
 in the Gospel-Feast, then *there could not*
 Heb. 11. 3. *have been more than there is, made ready*
 There might have been more Worlds
 framed by the Word of God, but
 Psa. 130. 7. *there could be but one plenteous Redem*
ption. Nature might have been printed
 Luk. 2. 14. *in a larger Volume, but Grace and Good*
 † *will to men could not be publishd † more*
 † *large or lovely, than God hath made*
 Heb. 10. 7. *them in the Volume of his Book. He hath*
 Psa. 40. 7. *provided more to save one Soul, than*
was sufficient to make many Worlds.

† *Auffior*
 & *emtn-*
dation.

* He

* He had *one* only Son, and he gave a richer Portion with this *one*, and this *only* Son of his Love, than could be increased by this whole World's Goods. It was impossible we should have more than so great a Feast at the Marriage of the King's Son. He that provided the *Feast* made the *Match*, and gave his own Son to marry us. And lo! *All the Kingdoms of the World with the Glory of them*, if they had the Golden Mines of Ophir or (d) *Parvaim* (e), nay, the Riches of ten Thousand Times ten Thousand *Indies*, would be all † *less than nothing and vanity* in comparison of this || *unspeakable Gift* of his Love. When God **So** loved the (*) *World*, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting Life, *John* 3. 16. He could not enrich it with a greater Dowry, than this invaluable Treasure. One *Christ* brings in more than *Millions* can reckon up to count it. We may find Words, says (f) one, to paint

* *Primogenitus* antequem natus, unigenitus post quem natus.

Matth. 4. 8.

(d) Both the same place as some think; but others do make them distinct, and seem to incline that *Parvaim* was no other than the Country of *Para* in the *American* Continent. Mr. Sam. Lee, *Temple of Solomon*, pag. 224.

(e) Others again believe that *Parvaim* might be a Country now altogether unknown. Dr. Tho. Fuller. *Pisgah-Sight*, 1st Part. pag. 371.

† *Isa.* 40. 17.

|| *2 Cor.* 9. 15.

(*) Taken (as before noted) *ἡ ἐκλεκτοί*, for the Elect in all Ages of the world.

(f) *Rutherford, Christ's Dying*, p. 136.

T

out

out Creatures, and the *Garment* may be wider than the Thing ; but should *Angels* come and help us to find out Expressions for this matter, Words would be too low and on this side of it. The very *Apostle* was at a loss for a higher Word to utter it than the *unsearchable Riches of Christ*,

Eph. 3. 8. * Riches beyond our Footsteps, Riches we can never trace out : (g) They have a glorious *Height* that transcends our Low *Stature*. These All Things in the *Everlasting Gospel* could not be made more

glorious, if ten Thousand Worlds heapt upon so many Millions were added new to them ! The *Apostle* again calls it the exceeding *Riches of his Grace*, *Eph. 2. 7.*

which (h) Dr. *Goodwyn* observes is an *Epithete* given no where else in the Scripture to the Grace of God. Grace is *Exceeding*, and there can be no

more added to it.

Alas ! every Thing in this poor sorry World of our's is capable of a very high
Rom. 8. 22. Enlargement : The World is a *Prisoner*, and the whole Creation groans to be set
Eccl. 1. 3. free, and nothing under the Sun hath a
Divine

* Τὸν ἀνεξήχριστον πλεον.

(g) *Altitudinem habent, humane mentis Angustias modulumq; superantem.* Bodius in *Eph.* pag. 358. Col. 1.

(h) On the *Ephesi-ans*. 2d Vol. of his Works. Part 2d. pag. 237.

Divine Perfection in it ; but the Love of God to Sinners is so big with Treasure, it could *not* be bigger, or possibly any other ways compleated. The Reason is, because it is Infinite, a Feast without any Bounds, or Dimensions of Love that made it ! The Store of the Gospel is so large, that Heaven and *Earth with the Fulness thereof* could not augment the Riches of his Grace, or swell the Love of God higher. That God who hath prepared this magnificent Entertainment, may apply the same Interrogatory to the Feast, which he put concerning the Vineyard, *Isa. 5. 4. — What could have been done more that I have not done in it ?* i. e. No Means had been in any Kind wanting ; so in the Gospel, there could be no further Preparation, no Dish or Dainty, nor Morsel of the Grace of God made, to be added to what is Made ready. Doth the Salvation of a Precious Soul require a Greater Price than hath been fully paid to save it ? Could God give us more than his *Son*, or could he give us *any* Son besides. Could Christ have given more than richly give himself, when the *Son of man* came to give his Life a ransom for many ? There are *all things*, and what ?

Psa. 24. 1

Eph. 5. 25.

Mat. 20. 28

T 2

Could

2 Cor. 4. 17

Could there have been *more* than all at once ready? there is nothing wanting to be added unto *Grace*, or need either be put into the *Scale* to make up the *exceeding weight of Glory*. There are all things that appertain to Life, or belong to Godliness, Godliness *here in Christ*, and Eternal Life *hereafter with him*. In a word, the Gospel makes up so full an Entertainment, that we may *put in* what Christ at the Time of his Crucifixion *pour'd forth*, when he was *bowing of his Head*, and *giving up the Ghost*, *Joh. 19. 30.* It is *Finished*, no more Ransom to be paid, no more store for the Feast to be provided. He had purchased at once wherewith we might be *perfected for ever*. The Gospel needs no more of the work of God about it, to make the Grace of God richer; he hath brought it into a Blessed Perfection, and hath put his *Last Hand* to it.

Heb. 10. 14

3 Inf.

3. As the Gospel could be made no larger, so the Provisions could be made no less for Love to make *enough*. Grace and Love are Two sweet Springs that have not *bubled* or been *broken up* in vain. We indeed thro' Corruption may *turn the*

Jude v. 4. Grace of our God into Lasciviousness, but

Psa. 46. 4. yet no Streams of it that make glad the City

of our God shall ever run waste. Wisdom would not have contriv'd, or the Power of Love accomplisht, All, if Less had not been *too little*. Tho' the *Psalmist* (when he is pursuing the *String* of Vanity that runs through the *Pearls* of all Humane Excellency) seems to make a meer *nought* of this Life, yet we must not make a *Cypher* of the next; and tho' he expostulates, *Psal. 79. 47.* latter part. *Wherefore hast thou made* (we cannot add, and say *Wherefore hast thou redeemed*) *all Men in vain?*

Love could not be ty'd in little *Knots*, when the *Silver Cord* was twisted, to draw us in *Bonds of Love* with it. Ecc. 12. 6.
Hos. 11. 4.

The *Ocean* of Grace that overflow'd could not be pent up or confined in any *narrow Seas*. God would not be contented, but would give in *all*, when he gave *any* Thing to us.

And indeed as *Less* than All had not suited with the Infinite and *Boundless Love of the Giver*, so it had not been *proportioned* to a Fallen Creature's *Misery*. If the Line of Love had been *shorter*, it had not *reacht* to save us. Man's Case was at the worst, and there had been no Relief found, if the Gospel had not been in its

Psal. 39. 5. *best Estate provided.* If Christ had but
 dealt like *Ananias*, to have kept back *part*
 Acts 5. 2. *of the Price*, the Gospel would have been
 no Purchase for *us*. And therefore if
 we were *Happy*, we must have *all*, and
 could not have less than *All* the Gospel
 ours. As when *Israel* went out of *Egypt*, the
 Psal. 104. 1 *House of Jacob* from a *People of strange*
Language, they could not go out fewer than
 their whole Multitude, and all that apper-
 Num. 16. 23. *tained to them*, (inasmuch that when *Mo-*
ses is debating with *Pharaoh* about the
 Terms upon which they would leave *E-*
gypt, he tells him) there shall not be so
 much as their Flocks and their Herds ex-
 empted, *our Cattle shall go with us, there*
 Ex. 10. 26. *shall not an Hoof be left behind*: So to al-
 lude in the Case before us) when Man
 was to be redeemed from everlasting De-
 struction, and advanced into Fellowship
 and everlasting Communion with the
 Great God, there was not one Essential
 * Jot or Tittle of the Gospel must fail;
 if it had, our Salvation had failed with
 it. As in the Law, to || offend but in
 one point had been a Breach *guilty of all*;
 so in the Gospel, to have left out but one
 Provision of † *the manifold Grace of God*
 (necessary to our Salvation) had been
 enough

* ע' יורה
 נ' מזה-
 ג'א, not
 so much
 as a little
 Greek Let-
 ter, or one
 Hebrew
 Point.

|| Jam. 2. 10
 † Pet. 4. 10

enough to have shut us everlastingly out of all *Happiness*, and concluded us under Gal. 3 22 all *Misery*.

Jesus Christ did not merit *one* Benefit in the Work of our Salvation, that could have been left *undone* or spared: and therefore he tells his Disciples, *Luk.* 24. 44. after they had seen such a concurrence of Wonders that seem'd to be drawn as so many black Lines from the *Circumference*, and met in him the *Centre*; that is, after he had liv'd obscurely, and dy'd with Publick Infamy, *being made* a Curse for us, to procure our *Entertainment*; Gal. 3. 13. *These are the words* (says he) *which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things might be fulfilled* which were written in the Law of *Moses*, and in the *Prophets*, and in the *Psalms*, concerning me. If there had been but *one* thing omitted, there had been a *Defective* and not a Full Accomplishment: There had been too *Few*, unless *All* things ready, we can spare *none* of them. Every part of the Grace of God, and that which the Grace of God tends to, is so rich a Treasure, that the Loss of it had been irreparable. Nothing in the Pearl of Price but is Divine and Precious,

Heb. 6. 11.
2 Ep. Job.
8.

there's not a Jewel could be spar'd in the Crown either of Grace or Glory; The one is necessary to bring us to the *Full Assurance of Hope*, and the other that we receive a *Full Reward in Heaven*.

4 *Inf.*

(i) Meif-
n rus de
Ecclesi.
pag. 46.

Pla. 50. 12.

4. Tho' the Gospel be a Feast with *All Things ready, yet with nothing ~~we~~ prepar'd*. The Father of Spirits will stand alone the Provider, and will have *no Flesh to glory in his Presence*, 1 Cor. 1. 29. We must say of all as (i) one doth judiciously *pro nobis, sine nobis*; it is Grace for us, but yet Grace *without* us; it is a Feast sent to us, but nothing of its Provisions were got in or served by us. He puts it in the *Singular Number* [*I*], when there was no *Plural* with him; [*I*] (not *You and I*) have laid *Help upon one that is mighty*, Psal. 89. 19. The King in the Parable makes his own Supper, his *Servants* have a Commission to call you, but are no *Caterers* to buy up or prepare any of his Rich Provisions for you. If thou art **Hungry**, thou canst not say *thou wilt not tell Him*, for the Food in the Gospel is His, and all the Fulness thereof, and thou didst not by any kind of *Work* so much as procure thine own Appetite; thy Stomach to this Food, as well

well as this Food to thy Stomach, comes alone *from* him. *The Desire of our Soul* Isa. 26. 8. cannot be *unto his Name*, and to the remembrance of Him, 'till first he provides himself and All Things for us, and therefore the *Psalmist* first mentions Him, and then his own Desire, he puts in the *Object*, and then puts forth the *Act*, Psal. 73. 25. *Whom have I in Heaven but Thee, and there is none upon the Earth that I desire besides Thee.* Now if we could not desire a Crumb, or long to taste of one Drop from Heaven, 'till *He that sitteth in* Psal. 2. 4. *the Heavens* creates our Appetite, much less could we have our Hand, or put in a little Finger to the Work in procuring this Blessed Meat and Drink. Our Poverty must be supplied *by*, it could not contribute *towards* God's Liberality. If we had *sold* our selves, we could not have made, or got up one Widow's Mite Mar. 12. 42 to throw into *his Publick Treasury*. All our Money will not buy a *Sacrifice*, much less could it mix with *the Price of Blood to* Mat. 27. 6. *sanctify*. It would not avail to procure a *Supplication to our Judge*, how could it Job. 9. 15. joyn then in purchasing a *Satisfaction*, Mic. 6. 6, 7. *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the High*

High God? Shall I come before him with Burnt-offerings, with Calves of a Year old? Will the Lord be pleased with Thousands of Rams, or with Ten Thousands of Rivers of Oyl? Shall I give my First-born for my Transgression? The Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul? Our largest Offers had been infinitely too little for one of the least of God's All things to have come at our Price.

- 5 Inf. 5. *All These Things must surely put a Dignity upon all True Guests. What an Honour have all his Saints, while the*
- Pal. 45. 15 Palace of the King sends to treat the Cottage! What a Preferment is it that God should stoop down to maintain a Communion with us! That our Lord should prepare so great a Feast, and then gird him-*
- Luk. 12. 37 self to come forth and serve us! These mighty Things will make Believers great, tho otherwise they are little both in their own and other men's Eyes. The Righteous is more excellent than his Neighbour,*
- Mat. 10. 42 Prov. 12. 16. If we state all Accounts truly, little ones, God's Little ones are greatest. The All Things do put an Honour upon the Brother of Low Degree*
- Jam. 1. 9 whom others make the Footstool. Such*
- Luke 1. 28 as are highly favoured of God shall not be found*

found *Ignoble*. Tho' he sends out *into the High-ways*, and takes up *Beggars*, yet *Mar. 22.9.* here's a Feast that makes them *Kings and Priests unto our God*, Rev. 1.6.

6. It informs also of the *Happiness* as *6 Inf.* well as the *Dignity* of True Guests that have got the Gospel-Feast *Theirs*. They are not only by an *Advancement set up*, but are a *People saved by the Lord*. Oh ! *Deut. 33. 29.* we may break out into *Admiration*, when we think deeply of the *Blessedness* of the People of God, who may come freely and partake of all these Things as their *own* ? The Gospel is not to feed thy *Phancy*, and please a meer *Imagination*, as if there were no richer, or more satisfying Good to the owners thereof, *saving the beholding of it with Eccl. 5.11.* their Eyes, as *Solomon* speaks of the Increase of the best *Earthly Things* : But 'tis a Feast made ready to be *Thine*, to fill thee brim-full with thy own share of *Christ*. Oh ! blessed are they that have believed and obeyed God, who requires the *Obedience* of Faith as that *Work of God* which will give them a *Right unto the Tree of Life* ; Rev. 22.14. *Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have a Right to the Tree of*

- of Life. God doth not require his People to look up as *Strangers*, but as *Citizens* belonging unto *Sion*, and as *Servants* that have * *Orders* from their Lord to meddle with it; *Authority* to appropriate the Tree of Life to 'em. A *Right to the Tree of Life*, (says (k) one) is a *Right to Jesus Christ*, and *Glory in Heaven* with him. Now, how rich and happy are they that have an *Interest* by *Faith* in the *Riches* of the *King's Son*!
- Eph. 2. 19. Oh! he *endows them with great Riches* and Honour, they can never want *Portion*, and he gives them this *Entertainment* that they may be *Happy* in all things, and never want *Provision*. An *Interest* in the *Son of God* doth not only make the best, the most, but *all things* thy own. *If thou wilt fall down and worship him, all shall be thine*. He hath purchas'd that thou mayst get *Possession*. Oh! blessed *View of Faith*, that can appropriate *Gospel-Grace*, tho' it be a *Self-emptying Grace* that will lye at *Christ's Foot*, 'till the *Soul* cry out, *I am a vile Wretch, I am undone, because I am a Man of unclean Lips*! yet is a *Grace* that exalts a *Saviour*, and will not leave the *Soul* hanging off from *Christ*, but clinging
- (k) Durham on the Revelation.
- * 2^d Cor. 12.
- 1 Sam. 17. 25.
- Match. 4. 9.
- Luk. 4. 7.
- Isa. 6. 5.

ing fast and crying out with *Thomas*,
My Lord and My God! Joh. 20. 28.
 God's Children that have his Spirit wit-
 nessing, see the Gospel for themselves, and
 not another exclusively. The Saints of Job 19. 27.
 the most High have a Priviledge beyond
 all other Men. *We have an Altar where*
of they have no Right (says the Apostle)
to eat that serve the Tabernacle, Heb. 13.
 10. The Apostle there means that the
 Faithful in Christ Jesus had such Pri-
 viledges by Christ as others had no Right
 to, who adhered to Jewish Customs and
 Superstitions. So there is a Spiritual,
 Divine Participation, which natural, un-
 sanctified Men have nothing to do with.
 Oh! blessed therefore are the *Houſhold*,
 the *Houſhold of Faith* that be not *aliens*
 and *strangers, afar off*, and having no-
 thing to do with these Things! Blessed
 are the Family that come in to the *Feast*,
 because God hath given them Meats,
 and 'tis now their *own Food!* They have
Children's Bread, and *Blessed be ye Chil-*
dren, for yours is this Bread.

Gal. 6. 10.

Eph. 2. 12,

13.

Mat. 15. 26

Luk. 6. 20.

7. An outward Liberty and a safe Pro-
 tection of the Guests at God's Table is a
 great Mercy. If all Things be ready, it
 is an Excellent Security that affords a

7 Inf.

Pro-

- Protection under the Roof of God's House, to enjoy them. None indeed shall be able to keep God's Children out of their *Fathers House*, that come nigh the Door
- Rev. 14. 1. with their *Father's Name written in their Foreheads*. The Lord of the Feast doth also plant a special Providence that guards the Table, while his Guests are plac'd
- Heb. 1. 14. about it. He hath *Ministring Spirits*
- Phil. 1. 17. that are set for the Defence of the Gospel; they stand as watchful Centinels for the
- Psa. 106. 5. Good of his Chosen, because he maketh a
- Psa. 31. 2. House of Defence to save them. He hath given his Angels a charge over them, Psa. 91. 11. Heb. 1. 14. that his Guests may partake of the Feast in Quietness, and
- Job 34. 29. when He giveth outward Quietness in a Day of Liberty, as well as internal Peace and Calmness, who then can make Trouble and Disturbance while he entertains us?
- Job 1. 10. The Lord hath made a Hedge and a Wall so high about his People, that none shall climb over, or break thro' to destroy the Gospel-Banquet, and spoil that Holy Festival: Upon all the Glory shall be a Defence, Isa. 4. 5. The Holy Mountain is safely fenced round. The Guest may trust to a Protection, where he tasteth God's Provision. For He that hath said
Break

Bread shall be given him, his Waters shall be sure, hath said also that his Place of Defence shall be the Munitions of Rocks, Isa. 33. 6. There is the Armour of Righteousness on the Right Hand and on the Left to guard both the Guests and Provision too: And 'tis with no less than the Mighty Power of God that ye are kept through Faith unto Salvation. 1 Pet. 1. 5.

* Kept.] Kept as a Thing or Person is when there be Souldiers set upon the Guard to look well to them; kept as the Two Centurions with their two hundred Souldiers, and Horsemen threescore and ten, and Spear-men two hundred at the third Hour of the Night were to guard Paul to Cesarea, to bring him safe unto Felix the Governour, Acts 23. 23, 24.

The Table of the Gospel is defended with a Flaming Sword, a Divine Presence that burneth up his Enemies round about him, and will no ways suffer them to rush in and spoil the Banquet, or Spill the Blood of his Guests that sit in Peace about it.

8. These All Things do inform us that they are worthy of all Acceptation.

Oh! with how much chearful Readiness doth it become us to accept the Lord's Kind-

8 Inf. 1 Tim. 1. 15.

Kind-

Kindness ! nay, it becomes us to take it of the Lord with all *sorts* of Acceptation : Our Hearts should be humble, our Hands active, our Feet nimble and our whole Lives thankful. With *Acceptation*. Shall we dare *reject* the Grace of God ? if the *Alms* be so Bountiful, shall not the *Beggar* be so wise to take it ?

Prov. 1. 24.

if God *stretch out his Hand*, shall we pull our Hand *back*, and refuse what he offers ?

9 *Inf.*

9. All these things do argue it a *Disbourn* for the Guests, who are Partakers of them, to have any *Fellowship with the Works of Darkeness*. Their *Company* and *Conversation* ought to be suitable to their *Table*. If any of the *Professors* that sit at Meat with them become loose and scandalous, it is their Duty to abstain from Communion with *such*, and in order to Purity in the Fellowship of the

Joh. 9. 34.

Gospel to *cast them out*. Nay, there must be a Forbearance of all *unnecessary* Communion or Fellowship and Converse with them, not only at the *Lord's Table*, but at our own *Common Tables* besides :

1 Cor. 5. 11. *But now I have written unto you, not to keep Company, if any Man that is called a Brother be a Fornicator, or Co-*

vetous,

vetons, or an Idolater, or a Railer, or a
 Drunkard, or an Extortioner, with such a
 one no not to eat. It is a Dishonour for
 Christ's Servants to go and sit with the
 wicked that wear the Devil's Livery. Our
 Master indeed when he came from Hea-
 ven, came to eat with Publicans and Sin-
 ners, which the Pharisees did upbraid
 him with, not knowing the End of
 Christ's coming into the World; and
 therefore When the Pharisees saw it, they
 said unto his Disciples, Why eateth your Ma-
 ster with Publicans and Sinners? And in
 another place the Pharisees and Scribes
 murmured, saying, This Man receiveth Sin-
 ners, and eateth with them: But Christ's
 Presence with Sinners was like a Phy-
 sician's Presence with the sick, that came
 to take away the Disease, but ours with
 them would be like those of young Blood,
 to partake of the Infection. When Christ
 comes to Sinners, it is to call them out
 of their sins, I came to call sinners to Re-
 pentance; but if we go to them needles-
 sly, it must be to cast in our Lot among
 them. God comes to Us in our sins to
 make us good, but if we go among others
 in their sins, it tends to make us bad,
 and in the conclusion may leave us stark
 U naught.

Psa. 26. 5.

Mat. 9. 11.

Luk. 15. 2.

Mat. 9. 12.

v. 13.

Prov. 1. 14.

Rom. 4. 5. *naught.* He that *justifieth the ungodly*, that is, cometh to *change their State*, converts them with a *Robe of Righteousness*, which makes it a Dishonour ever after to have any *Fellowship with Iniquity*. The Honour that God bestows at this *Marriage-Supper* should be a Perpetual *Bill of Divorce* to all our old Lovers. Grace makes Men too high to return again to *Nature*. The *New Diet* with the King makes it a Dishonour to Covet, or eat of the *old Store* agen. A Saint cannot sin without double *Dishonour*, because he is one that hath received *Double Honour*, the Honour that cometh from God, and the Repute he hath had with *good Men*. So a Professor debaseth himself every time he walks not worthy of, or according to the Honour and Credit of the Gospel. Alas! their Table raiseth them to so high a Dignity, that 'tis a shame for the Lord's Guests to keep Company with them of an ill Blood. What? shall the *King's Favourites* run out of his *Presence-Chamber*, or leave the *Guest-Chamber* for his *Stables and Kitchen*, to go mix with *Grooms and Scullions*? Wicked Men are no others but such as the Great Lord employs in his Kitchen and

and Stables below in this World. Now (1) Dr. Lightfoot, Harmony of the New Testament Vol. 1. pag. 231. Fol. See also Buxtorf. Synagog. Judaic. p. 251. Edit. (mihi) 1688.

is it not a shame when we have been with *Christ* to sit again with *Belial*? The *Jews* held it, (as one of our (1) Learned Countrey-men expresseth it) "That a *Scholar of the Wise* by their *Canons* might not eat with one of the *vulgar*, much less with *Publicans* and *Sinners*, the worst sort of all the vulgar that were. If the *Jews* held this when they ate Bread among *themselves*, much more should *Christians* that hold a Feast unto the Lord.

10. If there be such a Plenty in the Gospel made ready, then it is very sad where there is a Famine of the Word of God, and nothing of these All things enjoyed. How sad is it to consider dark Places of the Earth where the Light of this Gospel never shined, and the vast places of the Earth where they wander up and down for lack of Meat! how sad is it to think upon those Children of our Heavenly Father, that thro' the Fury of their Persecutors are deprived of all Ordinances, and ready to be starv'd for want of Bread! how solitary and uncomfortable is their state, while they are Hungry and Thirsty, and their Souls

10 Inf.

Psa. 74. 20.

Job 38. 41.

Psa. 107. 3.

are fainting in them ! It is a Terrible

Mat. 13. 19 Dispensation to have *the Word of the Kingdom* taken away, and spiritual Feasts turned into *Soul-Fasts !* this is so represented in the Prophet, as is enough to make *the Ears of them that hear it tingle :*

1 Sam. 3. 11

Amos 8. 11, 12. Behold the Days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a Famine in the Land, not a Famine of Bread, or a Thirst for Water, (as much as to say, I have a more grievous Judgment for you, I will not deal so gently, as to inflict a Famine of Bread, or a Thirst for Water) but of hearing the Words of the Lord, and they shall wander from Sea to Sea, and from the North even to the East ; they shall run to and fro to seek the Word of the Lord, and shall not find it. Oh ! dreadful is the Dispensation, when the multitude have been

Mat. 15. 32 assembled, *having nothing to eat !* when God hath suffered the Enemy to break up *the solemn Meeting,* to disperse the Assembly, and send them away *Fasting,*

ibid.

Mark 8. 3. *tho' divers have come from far ! 'Tis sad,*

Luk 19. 42. *when the Things of our Peace are hid (tho' it be but under a Busbel) and there*

1 Sam. 3. 1. *is no open Vision !* when the Wilderness is dry, and the Rain from Heaven that should

the Great Supper of the Parable.

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should have filled the Pools thereof, restrained ! if the Gospel hath All Things ready, Wo unto such as *Sjourn in Mesbech, and dwell in the Tents of Kedar*, in places where there is nothing of the Glorious Gospel of Jesus Christ found ! 'tis very sad with those poor starved Souls, if *in Famine he doth not redeem them from Death*, and in Hunger from the Power of Want.

Alas ! who can express the Judgment, the Desolation of a Forsaken People ! do we know what it is to see the Table of the Gospel like those *Tables of the Money-Changers* in the Temple, overthrown ? ^{Joh. 2. 14, 15.} it was the misery of the *old World*, and it will be the greatest Judgment and Calamity can befall our *selves*, if God should say of *us* as he did of *them*, *My Spirit shall not always strive* — Gen. 6. 3. It is Terrible to have the *Vials of Wrath* unstopt, and the *Cup of Salvation* put, or took away from us ! to be in a Kingdom that is full of *Darkness*, among poor Pagans and Idolaters that *never saw* ^{Job 3. 16.} *Light* ! to lose the Plentiful Provision of all things, and be made to *serve our* ^{Deut. 28.} *Enemies in Hunger and Thirst, in Cold and* ^{48.} *Nakedness, and in the Want of all things !*

this is Dreadful, and yet there are many Desolate Places of the Earth that were once *fed to the Full*, yet now do not know where they can go to an Ordinance, *to eat a Peice of Bread!* The *Seven Churches* are in the *Dark*, and have their *Lights* wholly *put out*. The Nation of the Jews that did once *eat of the same spiritual Meat, and drank the same spiritual Drink*, are now turned out of their Inheritance, like *Nebuchadnezzar*, when he did *eat Grass as Oxen*. The *Glory* (of the Lord) is *departed* from the Threshold of their House, and now when God is gone, *Jerusalem* her self is *without a Priest, and without a Sacrifice*, *Hos.* 3, 4. their Temple is destroyed, their Provision gone, and they have none to keep House for them! And alas! how equally sad and dismal would our own Case be, if *the Meat were cut off before our Eyes!* *Joel* 1. 16. and the *Famine begun in the Land*; *q. d.* if the Gospel that hath been spread in so large a Table, were taken quite from us! if he should *cause to cease out of this Place*, and out of this *Pleasant Land* of ours, the *Plentiful Field*, and send a *Cleanness of Teeth* in the Want of Gospel-Bread among us,

Oh!

Oh! how *black* might our *Souls* be by reason of the *Terrible Famine*! it is the *Plenty* of the Gospel thro' our Lord Jesus Christ that is able to *save much People alive, as at this Day*: This Bread shall do it, by every word of Blessing that *proceedeth out of the mouth of God*. Well, if the Provisions of the Feast *have all and abound*, it is a very sore Evil hath been *seen under the Sun*, when there is a Famine of the Word of God, and none of these All Things enjoy'd!

11. They are in a miserable Condition likewise, who are in the Presence of this Plenty, and *see it with their Eyes, but do not eat thereof*! what a Wretch was that Lord upon whose Hand the King leaned! *2 Kings 7. 2.* he sits crowded in the Gate, saw the Victuals come tumbling in out of the Syrian Camp, he beheld the *Windows of Heaven opened*, and a shower of Provision fell apace about him, but the Poor Wretch had no Vessel to put any of it in! he must only see it with his Eyes, but not eat thereof! he had not the Priviledge of a Dog to take the *Crumbs*, but was *trod to Death under the Table*! his Carcass was spread like Dung, after God had pro-

vided and spread before him Dainties !
v. 20. so it fell out unto him, for the People trod upon him in the Gate, and he dyed.

So likewise as to Gospel-Grace, is it not a very sore Judgment to sit under Plenty of Means, and yet in a spiritual Sence not partake thereof ! to have the Table of the Gospel spread among us, and a large Feast prepared, when so many of *those that are bidden* perhaps touch not a Morfel of it, but *dye in their sins*, and go to Hell at last. 'Tis one thing to *hear* of Grace, and another thing to *have* it. Oh ! how many natural, carnal ones, (meer *Unbelievers* while they hear of the *Means* of Faith, and the Provisions of Grace to work Faith in them) that have not one Dram of true Faith or Grace to lay hold of the Gospel offer ! they have heard many a Sermon about the Feast, and yet go away Fasting ; *q. d.* as natural and Carnal, as empty and unhumbled as they came higher ! miserable Wretches ! what have these to live upon but *the Bread of Idleness*, or *the Bread that perisheth*, but no Portion of that *which endureth to Life Eternal* (as hath been shewn) ? God is opening of his

Luk. 14. 24

Joh. 8. 21.

his Hand, and yet many of *you* are shutting your Mouths against him ! God is raining down *Mannah*, and you will not stoop to take *Mannah* up ! he drops Fatness, but you look on, and your Souls are lean still ! he prepareth Plenty, but you have such other Plenty besides, in your *divers Lusts and Pleasures*, that you care for none of it ! *He giveth Meat in abundance*, but how ill a use do you make of it, that come to see it a little upon the *Lord's Days*, but go away and do not meddle with, or perhaps so much as think upon the Provisions all the **Week** after ! how miserable are *You* !

Again, what will become of *others* that are Prophane, Filthy, Abominable, Disobedient, and to every good Work reprobate ? Are there not *some* who have been instructed in the Particulars of this Feast, and yet can feed upon *Oaths*, if a slight Provocation move them ? do not Prophane *Dogs* lick up the Devil's *Scraps*, and tho' they look upon God's Table, yet return to their *Vomit* again ? Now, is not your Case miserable, Sinners ! *whose mouth (it may be) is full of Cursing*, Rom. 3. 10. tho' out of the Mouth of the Lord you have

have heard so many Gospel-Blessings! and full of *Bitterness*, tho' that Mouth of *yours* should have been filled with the sweetness of *the Honey and the Honey-comb*! are there not some of you have thrown aside the *Cup of Salvation*, and taken up the *Cup of the Drunkards*? have you not *changed the Glory* of all that Holy Bill of Fare, to *shame*? yea, into such a shame thro' your own beastly *Intemperance*, as the Prophet expresseth by a *shameful Spewing*! Oh! how sad is it with you while you come and look upon the Provisions here, and as soon as you have turn'd your Backs, and are gone Week after Week, should be found in the Devil's *Company*, or about the Devil's *Work* again, *eating and drinking your own Damnation*! dare any of you thus to *profane the Table of the Lord*? And, you that are **Scorners** ridicule the Provisions, *make his Meat contemptible*? Again, How do you think after this Plenty, that God takes it at your Hands, you that break the *Third Command*, and customarily *take his Name in vain*, irreverently, wickedly and prophanely in your mouths upon every slight Occasion, blaspheming and dishonouring *that*
worthy

Hab. 2. 14.

Exo. 20. 7.

worthy Name which should only have been praised for his Bounty and Goodness to us? Would you thank that Guest who should go away reproaching, and ungratefully vilify your *own* Names, after you had either kindly entertain'd him, or offered courteously to treat him? *I trow not.* And what? shall the Great Luk. 17.9.
 God of Heaven and Earth be dishonoured in his Name, after he hath created, preserved and provided all, and spread so large a Table with *Blessings of Heaven above, and Blessings of the Deep that lieth under?* Further, dare any of you be Disobedient to Parents, and tho' you have heard of so much at God's Table, yet continue as cursed *Slips*, instead of *Olive-Plants round about Their Table?* Gen. 49.25
Psa. 128.3.
 Surely miserable is the Congregation of the Wicked, and sad is *your* state that have the Opportunities of Gospel-Grace, and yet do but *see it with your Eyes, and never eat thereof!* and that hear of Heaven, but must never, if you be not changed, enter in there; for *there shall in no wise enter into it any Thing that defileth.* Rev. 21.27
 Let those words, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. dwell much upon you, *Know ye not that the Unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God?*

God? Be not deceived, neither Fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, nor Effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with Mankind, nor Thieves, nor Covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners, shall inherit the Kingdom of God. Remember all these Things must pass away, and there must be nothing of them remain, but only to testifie of the

1 Cor. 6. 11 Grace of God that *such were some of you.*

12 Inf. 12. Continuance in Unbelief, and a Refusal of these All Things, is Dreadful. The State of Unbelievers must be miserable that hath no Portion in these Things, and the Sin of Unbelievers must needs become provoking that keeps them from laying hold upon them. Did you be-

Rom. 6. 1. lieve, you dare not trifle, or continue in sin, when Grace thus abounds. You dare not grow loose, if you did believe, or joyn with this Grace that was made to knit our Hearts to Christ. Oh! your Unbelief, which carries all your other sins in the Belly of it, is a Monster big with Aggravation. Let me represent the Dreadfulness of your Sin in two or three Instances.

1. You refuse the only Remedy. You sin against Grace, and Works cannot save you. These all things are for the reconciling

reconciling you unto God, and yet you prefer to be *Enemies in your Minds* (and Col. 1. 21. in your ways) by wicked Works. They are for *sanctifying* and renewing your Abominable, polluted Natures, and yet you choose to remain *Filthy still* ! They Rev. 22. 11 are for *healing* you, and yet you will die of your *Wounds* before ! They are for *feeding* and *cloathing* you, and yet you will be *starv'd*, and then turn'd out *naked* to the Judgment Seat of God ! In one Word, they are for *saving* you, and yet you will die, and be *damn'd* for ever, Prov. 8. 36. *He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own Soul, all they that hate me love Death.*

2. *You rebell against the Light.* You have heard, you have seen enough to cast you, if you do not quickly cry for Mercy, and if *Jesus the Son of God have not mercy* Mark 10. on you. Oh ! where will you flee to hide, 47, 48. when Christ lays this Sin at your Door, that you had been inform'd of the Provisions made for Sinners, and the more you knew, the more you hated God's Offers made to you ? See John 15. 24. *If I had not done among them the Works which none other Man did, they had not had sin, (i.e. nothing in comparison of what they now have) but now have they both seen*
and

and hated both me and my Father. You have heard of what Importance this Feast is, and therefore it is a Rebelling against the Light to make light of it.

3. *You trample upon Distinguishing Grace that comes with outward Peace to you. God might have kept a Market with the*
 Psal. 44. 11 *Enemy, and given you as Sheep appointed for meat. Asaph enditeth a sad Complaint of this nature, Psal. 79. 1, 2. O God, the Heathen are come into thine Inheritance, thy Holy Temple have they defiled, they have laid Jerusalem on heaps; the Dead Bodies of thy Servants have they given to be meat unto the Fowls of the Heaven, the Flesh of thy Saints unto the Beasts of the Earth: And v. 3. Their Blood have they shed like Water round about Jerusalem. Consider, others have been fain to break thro' the Hosts of the Mighty to come at Bread, or fetch a supply of Living Water; but you are offer'd Both in a Day of Gracious Liberty, when you need not get*
 Lam. 5. 9. *your Bread with the Peril of your Lives!*
 Oh! come and see the Works of the
 Psal. 46. 8. *Lord abroad, what Desolations he maketh in the Earth, while he provides a Sanctuary*
 Dan. 9. 17. *for You that is not desolate for the Lord's sake. How do Wars ruine and eat up the*

the Countries round you, while you have Peace in your Borders, and meat to eat which they know not of! Oh! the Distinguishing Grace of God, that he should on you be raining *Mannah*, when on so many *Thousands* in the World he has been seen raining *Blood*! Ah! Could you have looked into Neighbouring Countries, and seen the Frights, the Perplexities, the Distresses of Nations, the Groans of Dying wounded Men, the Revenge of Armies boiling in their Blood, the Thunder of the Captains and the shouting! Could you see that Supper which God hath been making beyond the Seas for the Fowls upon allain Carcasses, as the Holy Ghost signifieth, when he speaks of an Eagle flying in the Sun, Rev. 19. 17, 18. and crying with a loud voice, saying, to all the Fowls that fly in the midst of Heaven, Come, and gather your selves together unto the Supper of the Great God, that ye may eat the Flesh of Kings, and the Flesh of Captains, and the Flesh of mighty men. Oh! how might you then admire, that he should send forth any of the Angels of the Churches, any Servants of His at our Gospel Supper-Time, to say to them that are bidden, come! that they should be Angels to invite

Ps. 147. 14

Luk. 21. 25

Luk. 14. 17

vite you, and not *Armies* to devour you! And will you sin against the Distinguishing Grace of God that calls you to *this* Supper, when you might have been dilt up among slain Carkases at the *other*? The Lord could have bidden Guests which should have come upon the *Wing*, if he had but said, *Thy Carkase shall be Meat unto all the Fowls of Heaven.*

Deut. 28.
26.

13 Inf.

13. If there be such Plenty now where God's People partake of the Gospel, Oh! *what an infinite Stock of Plenty is That which is still reserv'd for Heaven!* If it be so much to look upon his Love, when thou art looking thro' the *Lattefs*, what will it be when the Windows fly open, and thy Soul shall mount up like the *Chariots*

Song 6.12.

riots of Amminadab, upon Angel's Wings to be for ever with the Lord in singing, and Mansions of Everlasting Joy! What will it be then to see him as he is for ever! Thy All now is nothing in comparison of what it tends to, when thou shalt be all *in the Third Heaven*, all rapt up in Love, all Joy, all bath'd in the *Rivers of Pleasure* to all Eternity. So much for the first Use.

1 Joh. 3. 2.

2 Cor. 12. 2

Psa. 16. 11.

II. Use.

The Second Use is of *Humiliation*, upon these Three Accounts particularly, as,

1. That

1. That we have Despis'd it. 2. Forsaken it. 3. Tasted so little, when we have taken something of it.

1. It should humble us, that we have despised the Gospel-Feast. God hath been *making ready*, and we have been *making light of it*. This Great Supper hath been *set before us*; I *laid Meat unto thee*, saith God of Israel and Ephraim, but we have *cast it behind our Backs*. It is the *Wedding-Supper*, and yet how loth are some of us he hath bidden, to be *courted* to it! It should bring us into the *Dust*, that we have preferred *Dusty Things* before it. Those Three Despisers in the Parable all *seek their own*, and with one Consent shut out the King and his Gospel-Supper. One had rather be *abroad in his Field* viewing a piece of Ground, than *under the Roof* of God's House at Supper. Another prefers his five Yoke of *Living Oxen* he had *bought* before all those other Oxen and Fatlings in the Parable that were *killed*, and made ready to be *given*. They each *made light of it*, (*ἀμυλίσαντες*) not caring for the Provisions of the King, to taste of his Supper) and *went their ways*, one to his Farm, another to his Merchandize. And the other Third that was married, careth

Mat. 22. 3.

Hos. 11. 14.

1 King. 14. 9

Mat. 22.

2, 3.

Phil. 2. 21.

Luk. 14. 18

v. 19.

Mat. 22. 4.

v. 5.

ibid.

- ¹Cor. 7. 33. *for the Things of the World how he may please his Wife*, Luke 14. 20. It should humble us, that when God hath took up this Supper of the Gospel by a Hand of Grace, we have been taken up with our Hands in other Things, which we have valu'd and preferred more. It should
- ^{Psa.} 94. 19. humble us, that in the multitude of our Thoughts we have run so low, when God thro'out so many High Mysteries plain-
- ^{Isa.} 55. 8. ly tells us, *My Thoughts are not as your Thoughts*! Again, that our Words have cast
- ^{Mat.} 14. 2. so many Reflections upon these mighty Works of God! That our Actions have wrought much Provocation, when He hath laid in so much Provision to nourish and sustain us to all Eternity! That we should design *his Glory* no more, who hath accomplisht so much to declare our Good! That we should set up our selves (vile Worms) before this great Provider! That we should so often prefer a Mess of our own Pottage, I mean the
- ^{2 Kings} 4. 40. Things below, where there is Death in the Pot, and esteem this large Benjamin's Mess in the All Things no more! Sure, it should make us with shame to take the lowest Room, and abase our selves, that
- ^{Luk.} 14. 9. have exalted our ways against God, that hath

hath done so much at the *Upper End* for us!

2. It should humble us, *that we have forsaken our First Love*, we have once shewn to it. The Church of *Ephesus*, *Rev. 3.* seemed to have *fed* so long, that she took a *Spiritual Surfeit*, and cared less for her Meat than she was wont to do before: The Master of the House takes notice how well she kept to her Diet, *v. 3.* and that tho' she had met with never so many Difficulties for this Feast's sake, yet had a long while bore them: *Thou hast born, and hast Patience, and for my Name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted:* But when she grew weary of her *Bill of Fare*, he brings in a *Bill of Indictment* in a sad Charge against her, *v. 4.* *Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first Love.* And should we not bewail it, that our own Plenty hath brought forth the *Ephesian-Surfeit* in England, and that even as to the very *Profession* of the Gospel there hath been so great a *forsaking* in the *midst of the Land*? Have we not *Isa. 6. 12.* in our Plenty forgotten the *Bread of Adversity*? Oh! how precious was the Provision, when we thought we should eat no more of it! When God was threat-

ning to break up House, did not we *promise* to prize his Table better? When some of the Synagogues of God in the Land had been shut up, and others, thro' the Fury of the Enemy pulled down, had not we like *Caleb another Spirit given us?*

Num. 14.
24.

At the opening of our Liberty, when

Hos. 2. 15.

God set open that *Door of Hope*, how did we see many entring in by the Door, that since have returned, and now are *climb-*

Joh. 10. 1.

ing up some other new way? Nay, how many in the straitest Times of Difficulty,

Gal. 5. 7.

have seem'd to *run well*, and followed Christ for the Loaves, I mean have been so zealously affected towards the Gospel,

1 Sam. 21. 6

that rather than *fast*, would put *Hot Bread* into their Mouths, when Persecution hath been greatest, and yet now are *hindred* either from running or walking

Joh. 6. 65.

more with us? Again, as to *others* that come now and then to see what House God keeps among us, did they not seem once to come with more Appetite? Were not Men's Spirits once more akin to *Job's*, to love the Gospel of Christ, and *esteem*

Job 23. 12

the Words of his Mouth more than their own *necessary and Appointid Food?* did not this Heavenly Repast from God determine their choice best, when it came in com-

petition

petition with the *Food that perisheth?* Joh. 6. 27
 Could not some have been contented to
 lose a Meal at home, to get out to an
 Entertainment with our Beloved, where
 his Followers have gained more than
 Meat, and yet now steal away from the
 Table, *having loved this present World,* 2 Tim. 4. 10.
whither a Deceived Heart hath turned them Isa. 44. 20.
aside.

Again, should it not *abuse* us, that we
 seem'd once to have more Valuation for
 the Gospel upon a *Sick-Bed*, than we Mark 2. 9
 have had since God hath made us *take up*
our Beds and walk! Did we not better sa- Mat. 16. 28
voir the Things of God, when we thought
 of the *Graves ready for us*, and the *Worms* Job 24. 20,
 that should *feed sweetly on us?* What
 strong Cries could many pour out, when
 they lay howling upon their Beds, which
 have been long since forgotten, and worn
 off by *Laughter in the House of Fools!* How Eccl. 7. 4.
 many have *made a fair shew in the Flesh,* Gal. 6. 12.
 while their Face hath been foul with
 weeping, that yet have worn off former
 Troubles, after we had hop't by the *sad-*
ness of their Countenance to have seen their
Hearts made better. Alas! how deep in Eccl. 7. 3
 Shame should these Considerations lay
 us, that we are *not* (perhaps *any* of us)

Job 29.2. *as in Months past, and as in the Days when God began to send Plenty to us ! The Gospel is the same, but we are sadly chang'd.*

3. It should humble us, that we have
Job 16.8. *tasted so little of this Feast, when we have taken something of it. Who would not rather judge that some of us, by our Leanness that testifies against us, had kept a Fast, and never been at God's House a Feasting ! How starv'd are our Souls, tho' such Plenty lies before us ! How wither'd are our Graces after the*

Job 29.9 *Dew hath been all Night upon our Branches.*

1 Cor. 14.30. *He that hath gathered much of this Holy Mannah (much comparatively, more than another that sitteth by) yet hath no-*

Exo. 16.18 *thing over, and he that hath gathered little hath the more lack. The Entertainment hath been full, but how many have risen out of their Seats and gone empty away ? We have but Tasted of the*

Heb. 6.4. *Heavenly Gift, when the Kindness of God hath provided all, that we might have taken more of it. We have Often fed, but we need still to be fed with the same Dish again. Heb. 5. 12. Ye have need that one teach you again which be the First Principles of the Oracles of God. Some had*

had need to ly at the Infant-Breasts and suck a *Catechism*, being such Babes that many *Sermons* are too strong meat for them. Well, it should humble us, that we have had a great Feast, a rich Gospel provided, but little Stomach to, little Strength from it.

The Third and last Use is of *Exhortation*, to perswade and counsel you in reference to this Large Feast in all the Things before us. Take these Twelve *Directions*. III Use.

First, *Labour to understand the Provisions of the Gospel more.* 1 Dir.

Search into the *Mystery of Christ* that you may not have any meat to eat, which you know not of. Be acquainted more with your Table, that you may see what is set before you. The Heart of him that hath Understanding seeketh Knowledge, Prov. 15. 14. Let not God therefore complain of you, when he hath sent these Treasures of his Gospel, as he did of *Israel*, when he had written to them the great Things of his Lam, that they are counted as a strange Thing. Eat of the Tree of Knowledge that you may partake of the Tree of Life. The Supper will be lost in thy Winter-Evening, if thou hast not the Candle of the Lord to light thee, and discover the Things that

Hos 8. 12

that he hath made ready. Cry therefore after Knowledge, and lift up thy Voice for Understanding, be no *Stranger* to thy Diet, but *know thou it for thy Good*, Job. 5. 27.

2 Dir.

Secondly, *Meditate often upon the Furniture of this Table*. It is no *Spiritual Intemperance* tho' you have (*Animus in Patinis*) your Minds running much upon it. *I meditate* (saith that Holy Psalmist) *on all thy works, I muse on the work of thy Hands*, Psal. 143. 5. When others only wonder a little at the Gospel they know not *why*, as They at those Things which

Luk. 2. 18. *were told them by the Shepherds*. Be you like **Mary** in the following Verse, that v. 19. *kept all these Things, and ponder'd them in her Heart*. A good Christian (saith an

(*) Mr. *Jakyn*.

(*) eminent Preacher) is much in *Isaac's Walks*. He meant in *Meditation*, because *Isaac went out to meditate in the Field at the Eventide*, Gen. 24. 63. Such Spiritual Wanderers can turn *Fields* of carnal Pleasure into a *Paradise* of Holy Meditation. Meditate then in the Gospel, which is a plentiful **field** where thy Thoughts may walk to and fro with Freedom. Muse upon the Extent, ponder the Depth, contemplate the prodigious
Stores

Stores of Grace, *all the Fowls of the Mountains*, and the Fish of the Sea, and the slain Beasts on Earth are nothing to the House that God keeps for thee, therefore meditate upon these Things. Psa. 50. 11.

Thirdly, Be not satisfied till the Provisions are all made yours. Children have [De] any meat, John 21. 5. What have you laid in of those Things wherein God hath laid out. It is not Sight but Interest, nor Speculation but Enjoyment will be of use to you. If you gain not this Point, you lose your selves for ever. But how comfortable will you find it, to read over this Bill of Fare in the Text, when you can add Paul's Comment in the Margent, *all are yours*, 1 Cor. 3. 22. last words. 1 Tim. 4. 15
3 Dir.

Fourthly, Partake Plentifully of this Entertainment. Deal not with a well-furnish'd Table, as Men do with a Frugal Diet, to be sparing. Let not this (n) Appointed Food be ty'd to any scanty Rules. 'Tis not indifferent to a Child of God, whether he eat little or much. I would not therefore only, as Paul exhorted in another case, press you to take some meat, Acts 27. 34. but would 4 Dir.

(n) Significat & vultus Rationem, quam quis sibi velut decernit & prescribit, ut eam non transgrediatur. Mercer. in Job. 23. 12.

would say as the Angel of the Lord did to *Elijah* when he touched him the second Time, (still) *Arise and eat*, 1 *Kings* 19. 7. The Prophet had once at the Motion of the Angel eaten before, of a *Cake baked on the Coals*, and drank of a *Cruse of Water* at his Head, v. 5, 6. But because the Journey was too great for him to perform after ordinary, slender feeding, he is bid to eat again, and accordingly *he arose*, v. 8. and did eat and drink (*i. e.* plentifully, a double Meal,) and went in the strength of that Meat *forty Days and forty Nights*, unto *Horeb the Mount of God*. He took a *large Meal*, and then he held a very *long Journey*. So I would perswade you to partake plentifully of the Gospel, believe with all thine Heart, eat and drink with all thy might, and take of what Dish thou wilt. Here is no need of *putting the Knife to thy Throat*, tho' thou be a *man given to Appetite*, as *Solomon* directs the *Epicure*. (o) Other Dainty Meats may undo thee, if thou hast not more Grace, than Appetite. Take plentifully therefore of the Dainties wherein is *no excess*.

(o) *Summum tibi Damnum & Ignominiam accerses, nisi Gulam cohibeas. Idem.*

Fifthly,

the Great Supper of the Parable.

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5 Div.

Fifthly, *Return Thanks*. As it comes in Love, return it to Love agen. "Wicked Men (as one observes of their common Mercies) drink of the *Stream* and forget the *Fountain*, and as soon as ever they have filled their *Bucket* turn their Backs upon the *Well*. But God's People are to shew more holy Ingenuity; and God's Mercies that draw out their Hearts, make them they dare not shut their Lips. What shall I render (saith David) unto the Lord for all his Benefits? Psal. 116. 12. All God's Benefits do require all, and more than we can ask or think to pay him. When David had been studying what Thanks to render, he takes the *Grace-Cup*, v. 13. I will take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Name of the Lord.

(p) Thanks is all God requires, and all that Man hath to pay. The Sacrifice of Thanksgiving is the greatest Offering we can bring to God's Altar. Praise is as much of the Lord's Tribute as we can pay in the Glory due unto his Name; and we must not pay less. We ought neither to eat of our own common, or of his hallowed Bread without giving Thanks. The

Dove,

Jenlyn up-
on Jude,
ad pt. pag.
118. mibi
Fol.

(p) Cum videat nihil
habere se quod rependat
confugit ad Gratiarum
Actionem. Mollerus in
locum.

(q) Pag.
109.Psa. 74. 19.
Song 4. 1.

Dove, as (q) Dr. *Spurston* observes in his Treatise of the Promises, *picks not up a Grain without casting up its Eye to Heaven*, and shall not the *Soul of this Turtle* that hath *Dove's Eyes* cast them upwards, while she is picking up his Mercies? As we must be Beggars for Mercy, we ought to be Thank-offerers those *Sweet Singers of Israel* upon our receiving of it, especially for the Gospel, in which we are prevented with his Blessings that are granted before we ask them. Be ready to *shew forth the Praises of him that hath called you*, 1 Pet. 2. 9. Even the Praises of Providing Love that hath fetcht out such wondrous Stores for you, and brought in all to treat you. Yea, bless him for *Sabbath-Festivals*, that he treats you upon every such *Solemn Feast-Day*. I had gone with the Multitude, I went with them to the House of God, with the Voice of Joy and Praise, with a multitude that kept *Holi-day*, Psal. 42. 4.

6 Dir.

Sixthly, *Work the Works of God*. Be not found a *Spiritual Sluggard* in God's Kingdom, that sitteth to eat the Bread of *Idleness*. Take Pains, Christians, with your own Hearts, and don't carry it at *Sion*, as those did at the Foot of *Sinai*, that

that *sat* down to *eat and to drink*, and then Exo. 32. 6.
rose up to play. The more *Grace*, and the
 more we are justified *without Works*, the
 more we should delight to work the
 Works of God. This *Fulness of Bread* Ezek. 16.
 should not be joyn'd with *any*, much less 49.
 with *Abundance of Idleness* in us. Don't ibid.
 think you can do *too much* for God, that
 hath provided and done *so much* for you.
 Advance his Glory, as you may be most
 serviceable and useful in the Places God
 hath set you. In a Word, *new Obedience*
 unto Him, who hath provided all Things
new and old for you.

Seventhly, *Pray Affectionately for more* 7 Dir.
Appetite, for Growth and the continuance of
Plenty to you. You may rise from this
 Feast, tho' the greatest Banquet in the
 World, and as soon as you are *up* be fit
 to *fall down and pray*.

1. Pray for more *Appetite* to this Plen-
 ty. Be *desirous of his Dainties*, for they
 are **Not** *deceitful Meat*, nor like those
 which the Wise-Man cautions the Man
 of *Appetite* to forbear, *Prov. 23. 3*. Cry
 unto the King least *Desire fail*, when thou Ecc. 12. 5.
 shouldst *eat of his Son's Venison*. Indeed (r) Dr.
 in other Things, (as a (r) great Author Bates Final
 observes) we may *sigh thro' Desire*, and Happiness
 when of Man, p.
59.

when they are obtain'd we often sigh for
 2Cor. 7. 11 Grief: But our *Vehement Desire*, or the
 utmost Languishment of our Souls, that
 *2Cor. 9. God would * *minister this Bread for our*
 10. *Food*, is a Desire *not to be repented of*. Pray
 then that the Holy Spirit would set an
 Edge upon your Appetite, that your Food
 when *carved for you*, may not be found
 lying *useless by you*. One Meal at thy Ta-
 ble, one Day in thy Courts, is better than
 a Thousand elsewhere? Psal. 84. 10.

2. Pray for *Growth* by it. Beg that
 God may never deal with *Thee*, as he did
 with the *Israelites*, when they tempted
 Pla. 78. 18. him by *asking meat for their Lust*, while
 Pl. 106. 15. *he gave them their Request, but sent Lean-*
ness into their Soul: Cry therefore and
 make this Intercession, *Oh Lord, I beseech*
thee send now Prosperity, Psal. 118. 25.
 As it is given you to *sit at meat*, pray
 that you may *thrive* by a Plenteous
 Feast. That you may not live upon
 God's Ordinances, and yet it cannot be
 known either by your Health or Growth
 what your *Diet* is, like those *lean and ill-*
favoured Kine in the Dream of *Pharaoh*,
 that *did eat up the first seven fat Kine*, and
 when they had eaten them up, it could not be
 known that they had eaten them; Gen. 41.

20, 21. Ask Improvements, many *Cubits* in your *Spiritual Stature*, that while you live upon the *Gift* you *may grow in Grace*, 2 *Pet.* 3. 18. Much *growth* should be desired from much *Plenty* and Variety. This will be a means to adorn the Gospel, and recommend the Provisions of it.

3. Pray for the *continuance of Gospel-Plenty to you*. You can never more aptly apply that *Petition* in the Lord's Prayer, *Give us this Day our Daily Bread*, than here. *Ask* not any *Meat for your lust*, *Mat.* 6. 11. *Jam.* 4. 3. but ask in Faith all other Things and have. Entreat the Lord, that he would not deal with you, as your Persecutors more than once have done, to make *empty the Soul of the Hungry*, or cause the *drink of the Thirsty to fail*, *Isa.* 32. 6. last words. Pray, that the *Good Shepherd* would still provide, and the *Sheep of Christ* be yet suffered to go in and out and find pasture, *John* 10. 9. Pray, that God would Not cast thee off, or throw thy Meat quite away from thee, *Psal.* 51. 11. *Cast me not away from thy Presence, and take not thy Holy Spirit from me*. Beg that the *Golden Pipes* of Ordinances (as they are Typed out in the Prophet's Vision of the *Golden Candlestick*, and the two *Golden Olive-*

Olive-Branches) may also empty the Golden Oyl out of themselves, *Zech.* 4. 12. That Ordinances may neither be broken, as the Pipes sometimes that convey the Water are, nor yet their Fatness or Moisture fail, as a means of conveying all Things ready.

8 Dir. Eighthly, *Look beyond the Instrument*, any meer Servant of the King's sent to call you, or bid to wait at Table on you. Look off from *Instruments*, and behold the *First Cause*. Holy Mr. *Rutherford* has an excellent Passage to this purpose in his Letters (s), *Such as are Hungry look more to the Meat than the Carver*. Oh! look off as hungry Feeders from the Attendance of his Ministers to view the great Provider, and taste the Vertue of all his great Provision. *Why look ye so earnestly on us, as tho' by our own Power or Holiness we had made this man to walk; the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our Fathers hath glorified his Son Jesus*, *Acts* 3. 12, 13. It is the Glorifying of his Son Jesus, and not the Abilities of Paul, or Apollos, or any Ministers by whom ye believed: We are but poor Lacqueys that run after our Lord, to be with him where he is, upon any great Day of the Feast.

Ninthly

(s) Pt. 3d.
P. 37.

the Great Supper of the Parable.

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9 Dir.

Ninthly, *Learn to be weaned from Temporals*, when you have such Provisions made in *Spirituals*. Take what you have in Christ, and be Content, *the meek shall eat and be satisfied*, Psal. 22. 26. tho' God *blesseth your other Basket and your Store*, yet live above the World, up-
on Him who hath blessed us with all *Spiritual Blessings* (*ἐν ἱεραρίοις*) in *Heavenly Things in Christ*. When he calls you to dwell in his *House*, regard not your *Tents*, nor lodge among your own *Stuff*. Take off your Hearts from *many Things*, and lay them up with your *Treasure* here in *All*, Col. 3. 2. Set your *Affections upon Things above, not on Things on the Earth*. Pant not after the *Dust*, Amos 2. 7.
when God *pours Waters out of his Buckets*. Be more *Crucified to the World*, Num. 24. 7.
since he that hangs upon the *Cross* hath prepar'd enough (*by getting all*) without it. If God hath drawn some *Earthly Breasts* dry, yet let these *Breasts of Consolation* in the Gospel wean you from the *Paps* that you have sucked. Let that World to come provided put the World that now is under you. In one word, be contented to wash off your *Thick Clay* which sticks upon your *Fingers*,

Y

1 Joh. 1. 1. gers, and *handle the Word of Life.*

10 Dir. Tenthly, *Pity others that want your Plenty.* The less they have, let your Bowels grow the larger to them. Be not of a *Narrow Spirit* that shuts out the sense of other Men's Necessity, when you feed in *large Pastures.* Be grieved Amos 6. 6. *for the Afflictions of Joseph,* and don't carry it like his *unnatural Brethren,* that Gen. 37. *when they had cast him into a Pit, sat down to eat their Bread.* Think of God's 24, 25. *Prisoners,* tho' the chief Butler may forget them, when he is *pressing the Cup into Pharaoh's Hand.* Tho' you have got a *Pleasant South-Land,* and the *Streams in the South* to make it fruitful, yet think of your Brethren in *France,* that are driven out of *their South Land,* and have their Springs of Water dry. Put on *Bowels,* when you behold your Table, and are *about to fill your Belly.*

11 Dir. Eleventhly, Tho' you have Plenty, *waste none.* Make no *Orts of Crumbs.* When your Table is full, *turn it not into wantonness,* least God *overturn it.* Tho' you have *found* so much, do not *lose any.* Beware of every *Morsel,* let none fall under the Table to be trod

Gen. 3. 10 On. Make *much of the least of all God's mercies,*

mercies, thou mayst yet be *low* in thy State, tho' thou art *high-fed* at present; and tho' such a Feast be now set before thee, thou mayst desire again hereafter to be fed with the Crumbs that fall from the Rich man's Table. Luk. 16. 21

Twelfthly, *Abound in Love*, both to the Maker of this Feast, and to all our Fellow-Guests with us. Professors of the Gospel should love, and such as eat together, cleave to one another. Love is a special Duty we owe at such a Love-Feast. 12 Dir.

1. *Abound in Love to God*. The Words of the Commandment that were written in Stone should be transcrib'd upon the *Fleshy Tables* of our Heart; see 2 Cor. 3. 3. Deut. 6. 5. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Might*. Oh! how should we send Love streaming out of our Souls, when Love pricks the Vein, tho' we bleed to Death with Love!

2. *Abound in Love to all your Fellow-Guests*. 1 Joh. 4. 21. *And this Commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God, love his Brother also*. Shall there be Contentions among Brethren at the same Gospel-Table, when (t) the eat-

(t) Fin-
lyn upon
Judg. 2d.
pt. pag.
118.

ing at one Rack hath bread Peace between the very savage Beasts. It is the Note of an Egyptian, to have an Hebrew in Abomination, and refuse to Bread with him. Let those quarrel who sit at the Devil's Banquets, but let us agree, who have our Table prepar'd of God. Let the Dogs fall out that fight for Bones, but let the Children that eat of Children's Bread, unite : Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity, Psal. 133. 1. It is comely to sit together in our Profession at the Gospel-Table, as we hope to sit together in the Heavenly Places, and not like Foolish Children wrangle and contend about our Meat, to provoke our Heavenly Father, to take the Dishes off, or send Us to Bed, to our Graves, without a Supper.

Gen. 43. 32

Eph. 1. 3.

II. Doct. *That God makes an Invitation to Sinners in the Preaching of the Gospel to come in to this Feast.*

The Method in which I shall endeavour to prosecute and handle this Truth, will lye in Four things. 1. To open the Properties of the Invitation, and shew you

you the perswasive Force, or Strength, and sweet import of this Blessed Word, *Come*. 2. To explain also the *Nature* of Man's *coming*, when God's Call prevails. 3. The Reasons, or *Necessity* of this coming urg'd upon us, *Why* it must be. And, 4. The *Use*.

The *First* Thing is to open the *Properties* of the Invitation, and explain the Nature of God's Call to Sinners, when he Invites them by the Preaching of the Gospel to partake of *His* Feast. Take them in these *Ten Particulars*.

I.

1. *It is a Gracious Invitation*, a *Come* Property that is full of Grace and Love, an Invitation that springs not from *common* Tendernefs, but the *tender Mercies of our* Luk. 1. 78. God. He is styled the *Father of Mercies*, 2 Cor. 1. 3. and therefore sends out to the *Children of Wrath* to shew Mercy on Eph. 2. 3. them. He is a Gracious and a *compassionate Father* even to *Children* that have *wasted* the substance, and *run out* the Portion he gave once unto them: He is full of Pity to such as have *run away* in the *original Revolt* from him, and therefore sends out to such *Prodigals* as we, a *Come, Return*, to fetch us home again. Isa. 21. 12. He seeks, he sends, he calls, and 'tis

Y 3

nothing

nothing but Grace in every Act, in every Voice, in every Line of Pity to you, as *Paul* was wont to Preface his Epistles, admiring Gospel-Grace. Oh! 'tis with a mighty *Emphasis* in the Language of the Gospel, that *by Grace ye are saved*, Eph. 2. 5. And again, (*by Grace are ye saved*) v. 8. it is by a special, extraordinary *Favour* that is let out of the *Heart* of God to you. (u) Grace indeed is *diversified* in the Scriptures, and comprehends *various* Terms of a Divine Affection to save, but they all agree in the Temple-Language without any *uncertain sound*, that we may utter our Acknowledgments, and break out with Shoutings, crying Grace, Grace, unto it. When God looks down from Heaven, and beholds from the *Habitation* of his Holiness, and of his Glory, it is with the Sounding of his Bowels, and of his Mercies towards us. They are Compassions towards Us that afford us a Call towards Him. The Church indeed seems there to complain of an *Abatement* of the Divine Care to her, as appears by the manner of her expressing it, *Where is thy zeal, and thy strength, the sounding of thy Bowels, and of thy Mercies towards*

(u) *Nempe Dilectio, Misericordia, Gratia atq; Benignitas.* Bodius in Eph. pag. 259. col. 1

1 Cor. 14. 8

Zech. 4. 7.

Isa. 63. 15.

ibid.

waras me? are they restrained? As if she had said, Why are thine Affections stop't from flowing out unto me? but alas! if God had *forgotten to be Gracious*, as *Psal. 77. 9.* good *Asaph* too was ready to complain, there had never been an Invitation to any such as *me*; O *taste and see that the Lord is good*, *Psal. 34. 8.* This *Come* in the Text had been blotted out of his Remembrance, if thro' *Grace* he had not engraven it upon the *Tables of his Heart* *Ila. 49. 19.* continually. He is a God that hath done every thing Graciously, he *receiveth Graciously after*, he invited graciously at *first*. *The Lord is Merciful and Gracious* in dispensing such a Call to us; *Gracious and full of Compassion* in the Gospel-Message; *his Compassions fail not* while he sends to fill us with good things. That is the First Property of his Call to Sinners, it is a Gracious Invitation.

2. *It is a Free Invitation.* Nothing mov'd, nothing compell'd the King, in any possible Deserts or Obligation, to send for such a one as *Thee*: He considered thee as *Poor*, and therefore would invite thee according to the *Free Riches of his Grace*: He comes freely in his Visit, and calls thee as thou art a *Sinner*, *Eph. 1. 7.*

ner, as a *Great Sinner*, as the *Chief* of Sinners in thy own *Apprehension*. When Luk. 14. 12 he maketh a *Dinner* or a *Supper*, he calls not the *Rich* that can make a *Recompense*, not the *Righteous*, such as are *Self-Righteous*, but he calls *Sinners* to *Repentance*, Matth. 9. 13. The Lord does not look for some *Great Thing* in you, to make you worthy of a *Look* or a *Call* of *his* after you, but when he comes to save you, he finds you as you are, and yet knocks at your *Door* to take up his *Abode* with you. Tho' you have not a *Good Word* in your *Tongues*, or a *Good Work* yet begun in your *Hearts*, yet the Lord invites you to *begin* and *carry both on*.

3Property 3. *It is a Sovereign Invitation*. As nothing in us could *move* him to it, so nothing he saw *in* us, or *by* us, should *divert* or put him off from such an *Invitation*. God will *Call* thee, tho' *Satan* casts in many *Things* against thee. The *Law* of God condemns thee, but yet however he will bring his *Gospel*, and have it offered to thee. *Conscience* may accuse thee, but he will not always hear the *Plea* against thee; nay, *Thou* also in *Self-aborrency* mayst say even to

to the Almighty, Lord, bid me not!
do not look upon such a *Dead Dog* as 2 Sam 9.8.
!! yet he will *not* be ty'd, he will not
let thee stop him, thou shalt not *hedge*
up his way with Thorns, but he will in- Hos 2.6.
vite thee to his Son, take it how thou
wilt of him, *Exod. 33. 19.* And he said,
I will make all my Goodness pass before
thee, and I will proclaim the Name of the
Lord before thee, and I will be Graci-
ous to whom I will be gracious, and will
shew Mercy on whom I will shew Mercy.
He breaths in *Sovereignty*, when he opens
his Lips, and brings *Grace, Grace* forth.
He will invite, he will entertain, he will
exercise a *Prerogative* while he offers to,
while he bestows the Gift upon whom-
soever it seemeth meet unto him. His
own shall be bestowed where the *Own-*
er pleaseth. He invites not only where
he foresees a *Heart void of Towardly*
Dispositions and moral Inclinations to re-
ceive his offer, but where there is a
perfect Aversation, a natural Hatred and
Reluctancy thereunto. *Even so Father,*
because it seemeth good in thy sight, Matth.
11. 26.

4. *It is a clear Invitation.* There is 4 Propert.
nothing in the Gospel but lays his Heart
open,

Joh. 16. 28

open, nothing in his Calls but doth make our way to *Him* clear. We may apply the Testimony of his Disciples to confirm this, *Joh. 16. 29. His Disciples said unto him, Lo, now speakest thou plainly, and speakest no Proverb.* He had before declared to them, *he came forth from the Father, and was come into the World;* as if he had told them, I came down from God, to seek, to call, to treat with Sinners, and bring them up to *Him*: *Again, I leave the World and go to the Father: i. e. I must go back to the Place from whence I came, and give an account how my Message sped.* The Invitation was therefore clear, his Disciples understood the Call, *lo, now speakest thou plainly.* What can be clearer than *Prov. 9. 5. Come, eat of my Bread, and drink of the Wine which I have mingled.* Tho' these Things are *Parables* unto Men by Nature, yet when the Spirit of God hath formed a seeing Eye within us, to discern and perceive Spiritual Things, we may then answer as the Disciples did to Christ, when he made an enquiry about their Understandings, *Matth. 13. 51. Have ye understood all these Things? and they say unto him, Yea Lord.*

5. *It is a Commanding Invitation.* Ministers have received a Command to Call you, and you have receiv'd a Command to Come. When Orders are given from the Lord, you are not left to the Will of the Flesh to put off the Invitation which from the Will of God you hear press'd upon you. The Servants indeed intreat you, and beseech you to be reconciled unto God, but the Master of the Feast doth require this of you. He is a Great King, and where the Word of a King is, there is Power, to employ his Agents, and Commission such as he makes the Officers of his Trust to deal with you. It is affirmed of the King in the Parable, *Matth. 22. 3.* that he sent forth his Servants to call them that were bidden. The Messengers of the Churches must speak the mind of God and Christ to you. Ministers are under one having Authority, and 'tis their Duty to declare unto you, what they have received from the Lord. The Servants that call you can shew their Lord's express Warrant to you, and a Commandment both to Them and You, to tell you by what Authority they do these things. Christ hath all Power in Heaven and in Earth

5 Propert.

Joh. 1. 13.

2Cor. 5. 20

Eccles. 8. 4.

2Cor. 8. 23

Matth. 8. 9

1Cor. 11. 23

Mat. 21. 23

Cha. 18. 18

TO

to speak, and his *Messengers* have an Authority by *Delegation* from him to speak
 Isa. 48. 16. also ; *Come ye near unto me, hear ye this, I have not spoken in secret from the Beginning, from the Time that it was, there am I : and now the Lord God and his Spirit hath sent me : So likewise that Commission for Christ's Messengers to invite you, will stand, so long as the World stands it self, Matth. 28. 19, 20. Go ye therefore and teach all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo ! I am with you always, even to the end of the World, Amen.* There is the Divine Commission at large, which warrants the Messengers to Invite you with a *Come and See*, with a *Come and Taste* the things that God hath prepared for you. Now if the Commission lays an Obligation upon *Them* to call you, is it not a Command, or an Authoritative Invitation from the God that sends them for you to come in. If they must *Preach* the Gospel, must not you *receive* it, and embrace it ? *David* lookt upon it as an Argument of weight, *thou hast given Commandment*

Rev. 6.
sparsim.
 Psal. 34. 8.

mandment to save me, Psal. 71. 3. and when God hath Charg'd us to believe and obey the Gospel, may we be at Liberty as we will, to accept or refuse the Invitation? either to turn at his Re-
proof, or turn aside from the Holy Command-
ment delivered to us?

Prov. 1. 23.

2 Pet. 2. 21.

6. It is an Open Invitation. The Gospel is said to proclaim, and not to whisper the Grace of God to you. These Gracious Calls are Publick, you may hear Inviting Mercy in the Great Congregation, as well as the small, still Voice, at home. When the Gospel is spoken of by Christ, Mark 13. 10. he tells us, it must be Published among all Nations, it was not enough that these things were done in a Corner. So when the Servants in the Parable are sent forth to call them that were bidden, they are Commanded to go out quickly (but not any whither, here or there at random, into by-corners of the City, where their Message would want a Conveniency to divulge and noise forth abroad, Go out quickly therefore) into the Streets and Lanes of the City,
is τὰς πλατείαις, into wide Places, as the word may signifie, where you shall meet with Room enough for the Company,
the

6 Propert.

Isa. 61. 2.

Psa. 40. 9,

10.

1 Kings 19.

12.

Act. 26. 26.

Luk. 14. 17

Luk. 14. 21

Luk. 13. 4. the many *Sinners in Jerusalem*, to gather thick about you, and hear your Message which I have sent by you ; and v. 23. *Go out into the High-ways and Hedges* : Go, proclaim your Errand, where you are most likely to find Company, be it in City or Countrey, *Jerusalem*, or in *Judea*, throughout all the Region round, or in the Kingdoms of the *Gentiles*, beyond *Judea*.

For, it is thought by Interpreters that by *Streets and Lanes* of the City, Christ meant the *Jews* that were then nigh at Hand, and to whom by reason of that *nearness* the Servants or Preachers of the Gospel could *go out quickly* ; for *These* were to have the Gospel first Preached, *beginning at Jerusalem* ; and 'tis thought that by the *High-ways and Hedges* he intended the *Gentiles* a great way off from *Judea* and *Jerusalem*, to whom also the Word should come, and be Preacht afar off in Places remote and distant from their Countrey and *Metropolis*. Well now, the Servants and their Message are come forth as openly into *your High-ways and Hedges*, *i. e.* unto and among such Inhabitants as dwell afar off from *Jerusalem*, whom the Parable seems to intend

intend and set forth metaphorically under these Terms ; yet as openly Preached unto you now in these *High-ways* and *Hedges* as it was in Christ's time in the *Streets and Lanes* of the City among the *Jews* themselves. The Invitation was *Open then*, the Invitation is not in *Private now*. The Word that descended from the *House-Tops* is not whisper'd and confin'd to *Closets*: Joh. 18. 20. *I spake openly, to the World, I ever taught in the Synagogue, and in the Temple, whither the Jews always resort, and in secret have I said nothing*: Why so

The Proclamation of Gospel-Grace is now *open*, the Silver Trumpet comes sounding close by you ; there's no Restraint upon a Message from God to you ; nothing to arrest it before it reach your Ears. When *Wisdom* crieth, *she cryeth without, she uttereth her Voice in the Streets, she cryeth in the* (w) *chief Place of con-* course, *in the openings of the Gates*, Prov. 1. 20, 21. *so chap. 8. 2, 3. She standeth in the Top of High Places, by the way in the Places of the Paths ; she cryeth at the Gates, at the Entry of the City, at the coming in at the Doors. These are Phra-* ses that express the *openness* of a Thing done

Luk. 12. 3.

(w) *Loco ubi varia semita concurrunt, & ubi sibi invicem, quam plurimi hominum occurrunt.* Mercer in loc.

done in the Face or the Ears of ^{much} People, as if Wisdom's Message had been delivered, not so much in the *Street*, whether of *this* side of the way or *that*, where the Passengers *half* are lost in passing by on the *other*, but in the *openings of the Gates*, and at the coming in at the *Doors*, where the way of *all* sides doth *meet*, and every one is pressing to crowd in or out thro'. The Word of the Lord that invites you, is intimated to be in its own *Nature* an *open Vision*, tho' it was then so precious and scarce in those dayes, that there *was* no open Vision *actually*. 'Tis no less than a *Ho* if any Man Thirst, let him come unto me and drink, Isa. 55. 1. compar'd with John 7. 37.

1 Sam. 3. 1.

7 Propert.

7. It is a large and comprehensive Invitation : A Come that shall reach Jew and Gentile both ; the Arms of Love shall make a wider Circle, Many are called, Matth. 22. 14. and all Israel shall be gathered. People, Nations and Languages will be invited to come and hear the Gospel, Mark 16. 15. Go into all the World, and Preach the Gospel to every Creature, i. e. (x) to Men of every Rank and Order ; to men indifferently of any Quality,

(x) Cuius
hominum or-
dini. Poli
Synopf.
omni Gene-
ri singulo-
rum, non
omnibus sin-
gulis Gene-
rum.

Quality, Character or Degree, to all the Kinds, be they *Barbarian, Scythian, Bond or Free*, tho' not to every Individual neither, appertaining to those Kinds. Again, to every *Creature*, i. e. as the word *Creature* is restrained to *Mankind*: Thus *Eve* is called *the Mother of all Living*, Gen. 3. 20. i. e. of all *Mankind* Living, be they Male or Female, but not to be understood of Living Creatures produced of any other kind. Well, the Call of the Gospel shall be a wider, a more extensive Call than now: The Hour is coming in the which there shall be *no Speech nor Language where their Voice*, the Voice of them that will be Called to Preach Glad Tidings, shall not come. But however, it is a large Come, an extended Call at present. God speaks it in the Ears of many Nations, *Come, fill your selves with Fatness*; Kings are exhorted to accept of it, to be wise and *Kiss the Son*, i. e. be subject to him, alluding to the *Kiss of Homage* which was used by the *Jews*. Cities, Towns and Villages are spoken to, Families and single Persons have a Message of Grace sent them, and the Voice still cryeth, *Come*. *You* particularly of this Congregation in *Cambridge*,

Psa. 19. 3.

Psa. 2. 12.

Z

are

are invited to come near and hearken, to *incline your Ear to hear, and your Souls shall live*, Isa. 55. 3. it is large and comprehensive, the Voice Cryes to *many*.

8Property 8. *It is a Pressing, Earnest Invitation.*

It gives no rest, but solliciteth and thro'

Rom. 2. 4. *the forbearance and long-suffering and goodness of God follows thee Day after Day.*

The Call *refused* hath become a Call

Isa. 62. 11. *repeated: Once hast thou heard it, yea twice*

that (Grace and Mercy, as well as) *Power belongeth unto God.* If thou art *slow*,

that shouldst be *swift* to hear, upon one Week or Sabbath-Day that's past thee,

God hath followed thee with another, and try'd thee by his Goodness once

again, if Instruction may but enter, and thine Ear be bor'd at last. Thou hast

now a Call, if thou wilt but come in and embrace it with *this* Day's Mercies. The

Apostle expresseth this Earnestness, with an *as tho' God did beseech you by us*, 2 Cor.

5. 20. The Call is urgent with Thee, as the Angel was with Lot to hasten him.

Gen. 19. 16 *While he lingred, the Men laid hold upon*

his Hand, the Lord being merciful unto him; Mercy was earnest, Mercy press'd

him, it would not leave him to be consum'd with a Sodom burning round a-

bout

about him. Why thus Mercy pleads with thee, *Why wilt thou dye?* Mercy is urgent, it lays hold upon thee, Sinner, ^{Ezek. 18. 31.} and would *pluck thee as a Brand* out of ^{Zech 3. 2.} Everlasting Fire; Mercy is loth to give thee up for ever: It comes with a sweet and gracious Importunity, it cries continually in thine Ears, *presseth thee with* ^{Judg. 16.} words, and would *draw thee with Bands* ^{16.} of Love to Jesus.

9. *It is a seasonable Invitation.* It is ⁹ *Properly* Mercy that is not come too late. He calls thee *while it is yet Day*, that thou ^{Joh. 9. 4.} mayst see thy way *before the Night cometh*: He sends out to invite thee with a Summons of Love before the Sun be down, and therefore let not this Day's *Sun go down upon his Wrath*, before thou ^{Eph. 4. 26.} art willing to come and Sup with him. If you lose him now, you may lose him ever; if you *dye in your sins*, you ^{Joh. 8. 24.} drop without Recovery! when thy Mouth shall be stopt with *Dirt*, thou wilt not eat of this *Bread that strengtheneth* ^{Psa. 104 15} *Man's Heart*. Death like a *Thief* is stealing in upon thee, and may *rob thee* of thy Table, before thou take thy Food! it may come with a *rough Hand* apace, to *overthrow thy Table*, and snatch away

Cloth and Thce, and All for ever ! but of this more under the *next* Doctrine.

10 Pro-
perry.

10. Lastly, *It is an effectual, saving Call to all the Elect of God.* If God's Power be accompanied with his Voice, we may add that of Paul to the Invitation, *who hath saved us and called us with an Holy Calling*, 2 Tim. 1. 9. when the opening of God's Mouth is joyn'd with the out-stretching of his Arm, then calling and saving us do both go together. Now God *doth* this to make the Call effectual ; he puts forth his Hand, and the Sinner comes to God's Foot immediately. The Gift of Grace and the *Effectual Working of his Power* do meet, and make the Invitation saving. When God saith *Come*, to those he intends to *bring in*, he *wakeneth their Ear to hear*, and gives them *Feet to walk*. He removes all Obstructions, and will make the very *mountainous way to Zion* become a *Plain*, Zech. 4. 7. when he intends to *save unto the uttermost*, Heb. 7. 25. and saith, *this is the way, walk ye in it*. Every *Lost Sheep* shall be found and brought home, before the *Shepherd* hath done crying after it.

Eph. 3. 7.

Isa. 50. 4.

Zech. 4. 7.

Heb. 7. 25.

Isa. 30. 21.

II.

The *Second Thing* is to open the Nature of Man's *coming*, when God's Call prevails.

prevails. Coming in the General implies a coming *off* from some Things, and a coming *on* to others : For in *all* Motion (suppose it *Natural*) there be two opposite and contrary Terms, *Terminus a Quo*, and *Terminus ad Quem*, one from which we pass, the other *to* which we arrive. 'Tis the same Thing in *spirituals*, in the Motion of the Soul towards God. We must come from many *Hinderances*, before we come to *Him* : There is much *within* us to be forsaken, and much to be left *without* us, before we break thro' all our way to *Him*.

First, I shall rank the Terms *From* which we must begin our motion in the Lord, and place them under these *four* General Heads, *Sin, Satan, our Selves*, and this present evil *World*. When we come, when we run after Him that calls us, we must start from every one of *These*. We must come off from these *four Terms* like those *four Points in the Compass*, if we begin a new, distinct motion ; that is, if we are *Spiritual*, and do not *walk as Men* ; for it is not Northwards or Southwards, towards the East, or towards the West, but a *sursum corda*, our Hearts only upwards.

- I. 1. *Sin* is a Term we must be sure to come *from*. The Invitation of the Gospel is a *Holy Calling*, and the Feast is a Feast of *Holiness*, and it will surely hinder our Compliance, if we are resolv'd to touch the *Unclean thing* : Shall we continue in *sin* that Grace may abound ! Rom. 6. 1. Tho' Grace should abound, that is, the offer of it to us, yet it will work out nothing, if it doth not work us off from *sin*. It must take off our *vile Affections*, as the Apostle calls them, that we do not hate the good, and love the evil, it must eat off the Chain we bind our selves in ; for this continuance in Love to sin must be broken off, before we yield to any New Compliance. We shall never stir towards a Saviour, so long as we stand in any Evil Thing. If *Iniquities prevail*, the Invitation worketh no Perswasion or Success upon us. All Things in this Great Supper will be too weak to perswade, if there be but one Beloved Lust prevails. You must not defile, you must not foul your Hands with sin, and your *Fingers with Iniquity*, when you come to eat Bread in the Kingdom of God, but wash ye, make ye clean, Isa. 1. 16. and touch not the Unclean Thing,
- 2 Tim. 1. 9.
- 2 Cor. 6. 17.
- Rom. 1. 26
- Psa. 65. 3.

Thing, 2 Cor. 6. 17. *Wherefore come out from among them, (that is, from Unrighteousness, from Darknes, v. 14.) and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the Unclean Thing, and I will receive you. (y) Be ye separate.] i. e. Remove, be gone, be not contented to lye still in sin, change your Doings and Behaviour, tho' you don't change your Dwelling; come off in your Affections and Conversations from the Pollutions that have cleaved to you; Cleanse your selves from all filthiness both of Flesh and Spirit, or you will never accept of the Invitation that calls you to such a cleanly Feast. Tho' Wisdom cryeth without, she will not help you, 'till she is suffered to break off the League which you have made with Folly, You must come from Sin, for it is unto Death, Rom. 6. 23. The Wages of Sin is Death; or you will not come to this Feast, to take of the Bread of Life in it. You must get off the Broad way, that leadeth to destruction, before you can advance aright, or come on to the Gate that's strait, and the narrow way to Heaven.*

(y) Egressus
in Scriptu-
ra animo,
non modo
corpori tri-
buitur. Ca-
mer. My-
roth. p. 355

2 Cor. 7. 1.

Prov. 1. 20.

Mat. 7. 13.

2 Satan is another (Terminus a Quo,
or) Term we must likewise come from.

2.

Natural Men are apt to imagine that the Devil and They are far enough asunder, his *Name* perhaps affrights them, tho' they can bear his *Nature* on them. And therefore if we comply with the Invitation of Gospel Grace, we must *Return* where we have *turned aside* after *Satan*. This may be opened in three Things.

1. *Sinners must come out of the Devil's Family.* The Devil is expressly called the * *Father* of Wicked Men, *Joh. 8.*

* *in* *the*
1st *of* *the*

44. *Ye are of your Father the Devil, and the Lusts of your Father ye will do. Of your Father, and therefore of your Father's House. His Lusts ye will do.*

His Children obey him, tho' they can

Eph. 6. 1. never obey this Parent in the Lord. You

1 Pet. 1. 14 must Dis-obey, fly from Him, if you would be found the True obedient Children. You can never be the Children

of God, if you remain the Children of the Evil one. Again, you must change your Family, and get off from your old Lord, before you you can serve a New Master ; for you are but one, and can

Mat. 6. 24. never serve Two, tho' Satan be a Prince, *Eph. 2. 2.* yet you must not consent to set him lord it over you : Tho' he be

Lucifer,

Lucifer, Son of the Morning, yet he is Isa. 14. 12.
 fallen from Heaven, and if you obey
 him, you fall down and worship Hell. Tho'
 he be the God of this World, yet it is 2 Cor. 4. 4.
 Treason against the King of Kings, to
 consent as They unto the Bramble, come Judg. 9. 14.
 Thou, and reign over us. He is called
 the Prince of the Power of the Air.

* The Word is the Authority, not the * ἐξουσία,
 not,
 Δυναμεις.
 Intrinsic Power: And his very Autho-
 rity too is wholly Precarious and de-
 pendent, and what he exerciseth in the
 Air as the Seat of his Empire and Do-
 minion, is no otherwise than by Delega-
 tion; so that tho' he be the Power of the Eph. 2. 2.
 Air, you must resist the Powers of Hell,
 or you resist the Ordinance of God. Re- Jam. 4. 7:
 sist the Devil, rebel against the Tyrant,
 tho' you have been born and trained in
 his Court. In a word, you can never
 become the Friends of God, so long as ch. 2. 23.
 you are related to this Enemy of God
 that owns you: You must come out of
 Satan's Family.

2. Sinners must come off from the
 Devil's Work. When they leave his
 House, they must leave his Service, both
 within, and out of Doors too. Alas!
 Men are nothing but Abominable, Strange
 Flesh,

Eph. 2. 2.
lat. pt.

* *Te èvèp-*
γυνί ⊙.

(2) *James*
Ferguson
in loc.

Joh. 9. 4.

Flesh, so long as they are acted by this *Spirit*. It matters nothing how they are *swept and garnished*, tho' their Houses be *hung* with a Profession, and they stick their Windows with the *Boughs*, so long as the *Unclean Spirit* dwells within. He is the *Spirit that now worketh in the Children of Disobedience* that worketh in, or * the Inward Worker: He doth not only stand by and look over the *Children of Disobedience*, but he works himself in them, i. e. faith (2) one, by way of *Inspiration and a kind of Breathing*. The Devil blows up Men to Wickedness, their minds *swell*, while that cruel Task-master enters in, and they are *filled* with the Devil: He suffers none of his Slaves to rest idle, among the many *Millions* he employs in his Service every Day. He worketh at the Trade of Hell, and will make all his *Servants* help him. He *cuts out* work continually, and all Natural Men, who remain under his Power, he *keeps close* as a hard Master to it. Now Sinners must be brought to leave these Works of the Devil, before they can *work the works of God*. You must put nothing in Satan's Hands, when you present yourselves

elves unto the Lord. You must throw off his Drudgery, if you would be doing the Holy Will of God. You must not make your Bricks in *Egypt*, if you go to be built up for an Habitation unto God in *Canaan*. You must be willing to be freed from *His Slavery*, before you are Free for Christ's Service, and shake off his Yoke of Iron, before you can take the Yoke of Christ on, as an Ornament of Grace, or a Chain of Gold about your Neck.

Prov. 1. 9.

3. Sinners must come off from all his Flattering Allurements, let him propose what Reward he will. We shall be led by the Heels, tho' we think to come to Christ, if in the Snare of the Devil we are taken Captive by him at his Will.

2 Tim. 2. 26.

You will never come to the Banquet of the Gospel, so long as you relish His Baits.

You must not have Fellowship with Devils, if you partake of God's Dainties.

1 Cor. 10. 20.

You will never be drawn in the Bands of Love to Christ, if you listen to the subtilty of the Serpent, to be snar'd by his Enticements. His Voice is as full of the

old Poisonous Flattery now, as it was unto Eve of old, when the Serpent beguiled her, and she did eat, Gen. 3. 13. lat. pt.

2 Cor. 11. 3

You

You must come off therefore from all his Allurements, tho' he points to a Tree
 Gen. 3. 6. of Knowledge, and a *Tree to be desired to make one wise*, or a Tree thou wouldst fain be at, if it bears *forbidden Fruit* upon it.

3. *Our Selves* is a Term from which we must come likewise off. Sinners must be taught to go out of themselves before they comply with Gospel Grace that calls them. We are all so naturally ty'd to **Self**, that it will be one of the *last* Things we leave for Jesus Christ. And yet if God's Call prevails, we must come off from our selves in these *Five* Things following, *viz.* Our *own Bottom Ease, Interest* (where it contradicts the Interest of Christ,) as also from our *Unwillingness* to come at Christ's Call, and all our *Carnal Fears* that discourage us from Christ, and suggest Evil Things to us.

1. In coming off from Self, we must come off from our *own Bottom*. We must depart from a *Sandy Foundation*, before
 Mat. 7. 24. we can come to dig one in the *Rock* that is *higher than we*. Our *own Hearts*, our *own Strength*, our *own Counsels*, and our *own Righteousness* are all such a Bottom

our own that we must remove our
Tabernacle from, before we can pitch in
Christ to have our *Foundation in the Ho-* Psa. 87. 1.
Mountains.

1. In coming off from our own Bot-
tom, we must come off from trusting our
own *Deceitful Hearts.* We are *lying Chil-*
dren, if we say our Hearts are *good,*
while we think them not so *bad* as others.
This is but next akin to that other Boast
of the *Perfectionist*, to say we have no
sin in us. Thine Heart is the *Dungeon* 1 Joh. 1.8.
where all thy *Vermine* breed, *Matth. 15.*
Out of the Heart proceed evil Thoughts,
and that is enough to pronounce it bad,
as the rest of the *Vipers* be not reckon'd
for *Murders, Adulteries, Fornication,*
Jealousy, False Witness, Blasphemies. Men
are naturally prone to think it is enough,
that their meaning is good, and intend
no hurt to none. They have good *Hearts,*
but they have not such *Heads* and
Tongues to speak as others: But you must
come off from this piece of *Blind Self,*
that be *that trusteth in his own Heart is a*
fool, Prov. 28. 26. Your Heart is despe-
rately evil, and the worse because you
are not Good enough to know it. There
are Depths of Wickedness in this hidden
man,

man, which you that have *Grace* have too short a *Line* to fathom, and can you then that have nothing but *Nature* search it out unto *Perfection*, that have not our *Thread* of *Grace* to help you? *The Heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?* Jer. 17. 9.

2. In coming off from our own Bottom, we must come off from all our own Strength. All our's, did I say? alas! our strength is dried up like a *Potsherd*, since our Springs were cut off in *Adam*, and if we would come by a *Right Hand* we must have Union with *Jesus Christ* our

(a) *hæc hic non est simpliciter sine, sed majus aliquid quasi dicat Christus, seorsum a me, nam eo loco Christus agit de unitate nostri cum ipso, quam tam ait esse necessarium quam sit unio Palmitum cum vite.* Camer. Myroth, pag. 163, 164.

Head. We may talk and boast of *something*, but *Christ* hath told us, (a) *Without me ye can do nothing*, Joh. 15. 5. *Var* Man thinks he hath strength enough to *catch*, but we cannot trust our *Hands* no more than trust our own *Hearts*. The *Flesh* is weak, until his *Spirit*

from on high be sent to work upon us. Phil. 3. 4. And we must let go all confidence in the *Flesh*, before the *Spirit* can be saved. 1 Cor. 5. 5. the Day of the Lord *Jesus*.

3. In coming off from our own Bottom, we must come off from all our own *Wisdom*

Wisdom. Trust in the Lord with all thine Heart, and lean not to thy own understanding: In all thy Ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct thy Paths. If we lean to our own understandings, we have found out a Poor Reed instead of the Pillar of Truth to lean on. Acknowledge Him.] In Him are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge. Christ is a Full Treasury of every Thing we need. (b) There is a Created

Fulness infused into his Humane Nature, and an Uncreated Fulness absolutely Possessing his Divine. If we are not therefore Fools for Christ's sake, we shall never be wise, (as we ought to be truly wise,) in Him.

If Christ be not our Wisdom, the best of our Wisdom will become our own Folly. Nay, were we Abitophel's, and Men, like Oracles, should consult us, yet if we took not Counsel from above, all our Wisdom would be turned into Foolishness. Jesus Christ calls us, and if we do not learn to choose our way of Him, we shall drop into Hell, tho' to a Foolish mind that's darkened, Heaven may seem lost before us. We must become

(b) In humanâ Christi Naturâ inest omnis plenitudo infusa & creata scientiæ, seu omniscientiæ absoluta. Davenant in Coloss. in loc.

1 Cor. 4. 10.

2 Sam. 15.

31.

Mat. 18. 3. *as Little Children, i. e. as ready to take Direction in our way to Christ, as a Little Child might be taught in the Way how to come to Us. If we think our own ways the wisest, in the Matters of our Souls, we make the Wisdom of God a Cipher, and, I am sure, our selves a great Figure for Destruction. You must*

Gal. 4. 15. *pluck out your own Eyes with those Galatians in another sense, I mean renounce all Fleebly Wisdom, that you may see none but Jesus Christ to guide you on, and help you. If the Father bids us to a Feast, no man can come unto the Father, to be welcome unto his House, but by the Son alone, Joh. 14. 6. lat. pr. No Man cometh unto the Father but by me. You must despise your own Wisdom in competition with Christ, and not carry it as if you knew of your selves what, and how to do without him.*

4. In coming off from our own Bottom, *we must come off from our own Righteousness. I do not mean to put off Morality, or the Works of Piety and Charity, and become loose, Ungodly and Licentious ; but I mean, that, when in the Discharge of our Duty, we may seem to others, or to our selves to be*

Righteous, then not to *trust* our own Works. It is an excellent * *Article* to * The this Purpose in the Church of *England*, ^{14th. among the} and I wish it were received as an *Article* of *Truth*, as well as an *Article* of *Peace* among all the *Sons that she hath brought forth*. That *Article* words it plainly in the close with the very express words of Scripture, *When you have done all are commanded you, say you are Unprofitable Servants*. Tho' thou couldst not discern a *Spot*, yet to justify thy Self in the sight of God is not *the Spot of* Deut. 32. 5 God's Children; see 1 Cor. 4. 4. For I know nothing by my self, yet I am not hereby justified. Tho' thou canst not discern a *Mote* in thy own Eye, yet the Eye of the Lord may behold a *Beam* in it, for in his sight shall no man living be justified, Psal. 143. 2. Now, tho' it be the *Garment of Christ's Righteousness*, and not thy own must cover thee, yet thou must be brought to pull off thy own, before thou put on His. So much for that First Term in our selves, we must come off from, viz. Our own Bottom.

2. In coming off from our selves, we must come off from our own *Case*. This is another thing we must leave in Self, be-

A a fore

fore we can come and accept of Christ's Call. If we choose our Ease, and would wrap up this Lust *warm*, we shall be loth to bring it with us *Naked* and bare-foot to Christ to be turned out of Doors. If Christ invites us to partake of Gospel-Grace, we must leave off that slothful Note, *Soul take thine Ease*, Luk. 12. 19.

* ἀναπαύου.

* Rest Soul, said that Sluggard, I have enough, cease from taking further Care; so the word signifies. We shall not care to *gird up our Loins* and walk after our Master, if we had rather *sit down* in our Poverty and lost Estate, and be contented in a Natural and Sinful state *with*

Heb. 13. 5. *such things as we have.* We shall not be Christ's Sheep, if we leave not that Practice of Foolish *Shepherds* off, who for this are compar'd to Dogs, in *sleeping, lying*

Isa. 56. 10. *down, and loving to slumber.* If we come to Christ, he will call us out to Watchfulness, and what shall we do, if we can-

Mat. 26. 40 not endure to *watch with our Lord* so much as *one Hour*! we had need to have another Spirit, and other Language than that Tongue of the Sluggard, *yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep*, Prov. 6. 10. A Call to put on Christ's Yoke, and sit at Christ's Table,

ble, tho' in never ſo ſweet and gracious
an Invitation, yet will ſurely be *deſpiſed* Job 12. 5.
in the Thought of him that is at Eaſe. A
Man muſt ceaſe to be like that *wicked and* Mar. 25. 26
ſlothful Servant, and not continue to be
Slothful in Buſineſs, before he's one whoſe Rom. 12. 11
Soul ſhall truly dwell at Eaſe. We muſt Pſa. 25. 13.
come off from our own Eaſe and Sloth,
and be willing to have Peace with God
any how, tho' we put our Sinful Fleſh to
Pain.

3. In coming off from our ſelves, we
muſt come off from our own Intereſt, where
Chriſt's and our own are inconfiſtent. We
muſt come chearfully unto Chriſt, what-
ever our Journey coſts us, or we may
go away ſorrowful, like that young Man who
had great Poſſeſſions, Mat. 19. 22. We muſt
deny our ſelves, or we are likely afterwards
to deal very ill with Chriſt. We muſt
be ready to loſe what the Fleſh might
gain, before Chriſt and the Goſpel can
be found the beſt Gain to us. When
we are building this Tower, we muſt ſit
down and conſult the Coſt, or it may
quickly end in Babel, i. e. Confuſion, be-
fore we finiſh, or have half done our
Work: So long as *all ſeck their own*, i. e.
are ſwallowed up wholly with making

Rom. 13. 14. *Provision for the Flesh*, they will be such as the Apostle speaks of, that seek not the Things of Jesus Christ, Phil. 2. 21.

4. In coming off from our selves, we must come off from our Unwillingness to come at Christ's Call. If we come against our Wills, tho' it be but hither to our Solemn Meeting, to hear what God the Lord should say, we go up a Double Hill, Pile upon Ossa, Heaps upon Heaps, Hill upon Hill all the way to Zion. A Man's Legs may bring his Body into the Assembly, while his Mind starts back like a Deceitful Bow, never bent for God; a Friend at home or Neighbour near you, may by accident perswade you out to hear, but so long as your Wills, Sinners, are hanging off from Christ, your Consent is no ways Cordial; your Iron Sinew yet was never toucht, to come bending and melting all the way on. Ah here lyes one of the Dying Symptoms, in this Plague of thine Evil Heart, which the Physician speaketh of, *ye will not come unto me that ye might have Life*, John 5. 40. *Salvation it self*, as (c) one observes, *will not save those that spill the Potion, and cast away the Plaster*. You must be Cur'd of Obstinacy, before you

(c) Dr.
Sibbs, viz.
Bruised
Reed, pag.
182.

close

close with Jesus. Tho' you are bidden to a Feast, yet your Wills must be *taken down*, before you can *take up your Beds*, and walk to it. *Willing and Obedient* go by couples, when God invites you to *eat the Good of the Land*, Isa. 1. 19.

5. In coming off from our selves, we must come off from all our Carnal Fears, that discourage us from Christ, and are ready to suggest an ill thing to us. When Christ calls a Soul unto him, if that Soul hath been much awakened, it often happens, as when a Stranger calls a little Child, the Child is loth to draw near, he looks like a Stranger, and he knows not how to trust him: But wilt thou serve thy best Friend so? Man's corrupt Imaginations suggest Evil Things to him: Our Eye is ready to be evil, *because Christ* Mat. 20. 15 *is good*, and we are ready to think, as if this *Joseph*, tho' he invites us to nourish us in a time of Famine, would yet find some occasion against us; as *Joseph's* Brethren thought and spake of him in *Egypt*. Now we must lay aside our Fears that *terrifie* us, before we can come to *Jesus Christ* to *treat* us. Methinks Christ's Invitation should bring our Faith, and banish all our Fears: *Be of good com-* Mar. 10. 49.

fort, rise, he calleth thee, were words enough to make the Heart of the Poor Blind Man to leap within him. Oh! how did he shake off every Impediment, throw his very Cloaths by to take hold of the Hem of Christ's Garment! and should not we shake off this Spirit of Heaviness, that clogs our Approaches, and makes us sweat with Fear, when we might in Christ have *Boldness* (or (d) Liberty to speak all the mind freely) and *Access with Confidence by the Faith of Him?* Eph. 3. 12. * With Confidence, in a gracious and well-grounded persuasion of kind Acceptance with him. I speak this only to you that have been mourning like the Doves of the Valley for the manifestation of the Love of Christ to you. And thus you have had an account of the *Third Term, our selves*, we must come off from, before we can come to the Gospel-Invitation.

(d) James
Ferguson
upon the
Place.

* *in mens-
ura.*

4. *This present Evil World is a Term from which we must come, before we comply with God's Invitation.* The World it self, as well as sin and our selves, and the god of this World, will try to draw us from Christ, tho' it be but with Cords of Vanity. Indeed this Temptation

tion

tion from the World, be it twisted with never so small a Thread, is enough to pull the Corruption of our Natures down-Hill: But neither must the World be a Hinderance, if we fall in with the Invitation of our God, and close with Gospel-Grace. Let me open this of the World briefly, as to the Things and the Persons of it.

1. In coming off from the World, we must come *from the Things* that keep us off from Christ; the Profits, Pleasures, and Applause, or vain Esteem of Men.

1. You must come off from the *sinful Profits of the World*. These do either eat you out with *Cares*, or press you down with the *Carriage*, or scatter and divide your minds with *Covetousness*, and may put you upon unlawful means to gain it. You must come off therefore in your Minds and Affections, and hang loose upon all Earthly Profits. Tho' the Gospel will allow you to *buy and sell, and get gain*, yet if you embrace *the Truth as it is in Jesus*, you must come from such Bargains where you have put Conscience to sale, and not *strike your Hands* in Cases where God hath *smitten His*. Behold therefore (e) *I have smitten my*

A a 4

Hand

(c) Percuss
manum mi-
am. Figur.
verb. com-
plesi manum
meam. Jun.

Hand at thy Dishonest Gain which thou hast made, Ezek. 22. 13. When you are putting the World into your Scale, take heed lest the over-weight press you down to Hell; for what is a Man profited, if he shall gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or what shall a Man give in exchange for his Soul?

2. You must come off from the *sinful Pleasures* of the World. You must leave off your *Stolen Waters*, if you take of the *Free Gift* of God. You must not come nigh these *Foul Cisterns*, or resolve to taste a *Corrupt Spring*, if you drink of the true *Fountain-water*. Ye have lived in *Pleasure on the Earth*, and been *Wanton*, ye have nourished your *Hearts*, as in a *Day of Slaughter*, Jam. 5. 5. And the *Apostle Peter* expresseth it by their counting it a *Pleasure to riot in the Day-time*, 2 Pet. 2. 13. * The *Original* reads it, counting *Riot in the Day* a *Pleasure*. The Word *Riot* in *Divinity*, signifies an effeminate Softness of the Mind contracted by much Wickedness in Pleasure, that even † breaks, and un-mans us; and if it destroys the *Man*, it will surely Mar the *Christian*. There is much of this *Riotous Living* in the *World*, among them that

* ἡδονὴν
ἀγόμενοι
τὴν ἐν ἡμέ-
ρᾳ τρυφῇ.
Gr.

† τρυφή
luxus, deli-
cia; a
θεῖα τρω-
frango. Pa-
sor.

that count it a Pleasure not only to be seven Years, but if it were possible seventy times seven *serving divers Lusts and Pleasures*. Now if you come to Christ, you must first come away from These: You must depart out of their Track, who are described 2 *Thes.* 2. 12. to have had *pleasure in Unrighteousness*, before you can tread in the *Paths of Wisdom*, and take in New Delights.

3. You must come off from the Applause and vain Esteem of Man: You must step over this *Threshold*, before you come into God's *House* to Feast; for how can ye believe, saith Christ, which receive Honour one of another, and seek not the Honour that cometh from God only? Joh. 5. 44. It hath put by many that have seem'd to approach towards Christ's School, but never threw out any that were truly entered, to upbraid them with This, we are *Moses's* Disciples, we know that God spake to *Moses*, as for this Fellow, we know not from whence he is, Joh. 9. 28, 29. it hath likewise overthrown the Faith of some, but never shook the Faith of God's *Elect*, to be told that Great Men have disown'd God's way, have any of the *Pharisees* (the Doctors of the Chair)

Chair) or the Rulers believed on him? Joh. 7. 48. But if you will come under the **Sun** of Righteousness, you must not be frightened with this *Shadow* that cometh betwixt.

2. In coming off from the World, we must come from the *Persons* that keep us off from Christ.

1. *Sinful Companions.* If we have Fellowship with these Works of Darknes, we can have none with the *Father of Lights*; for what Fellowship hath Righteousness with Unrighteousness, and what Communion hath Light with Darknes? and what Concord hath Christ with Belial, or what part hath he that believeth with an Infidel? and what Agreement hath the Temple of God with Idols? wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, 2 Cor. 6. 14, 15, 16, 17. So Eph. 5. 11. And have no Fellowship with the unfruitful works of Darknes, but rather * *reprove them*, i. e. convince them both by Life and Argument, for a Companion of Fools shall be destroyed, Prov. 13. 20.

2. *Carnal Relations.* You must first shake off their *Objections*, before you will yield to Christ, tho we should produce our

our *Causes* for your Duty, and bring forth our strong *Reasons* for it. It was a *Carnal Relation*, *Luk. 14. 20.* in him that had Married the Wife, and could not come to Christ; for had she been a *Spiritual Yoke-fellow*, she had put her Husband forward. We must be brought into a *Hatred* of Evil Counsel, tho' from our own *Flesh and Blood*, before We can be brought into True Love to Christ; see *Luk, 14. 26.* *If any Man come to me, and hate not* (Carnal Relations may be willing you should come to Christ a little, but they are ready to put in *Pharaoh's Condition*, *ye shall not go far away*: Therefore saith Christ, it is not enough to come, if you do not come to purpose, notwithstanding such Relations, *if any Man come to me, and hate not*) his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters, (all that would keep him off from Christ) yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple. You must hate their Advice, tho' never hate or disrespect their Persons, that hereby you may have the Person of Christ, as you ought, in chiefest *Admiration*.

3. *Other Evil Counsellors*: Tho' there be not Relations as a Bar in your way to

* *προσφερε-
σθαι*

to Christ, yet there may be a conferring with other Flesh and Blood, which the Apostle would not entertain, *Gal. 1. 16. Immediately I conferred not with Flesh and Blood.* The * Greek word in its most genuine and immediate signification relates to the *putting a Thing to one*, and so I *conferred not*, is as much as, I never put it *to them* as a Case fit to be decided by them. We may have Carnal Acquaintants we must overcome, before we *acquaint our selves with God*, and must be at some *War* perhaps with *Them*, before we can fully *be at Peace with God*, *Job 22. 21.*

Having now shewn you that in coming at the call of God in the Invitation of Gospel-Grace there is a *Terminus à Quo*, a Term from which we must begin our Steps, I shall next briefly open the *Terminus ad Quem*. Therefore

Secondly, The other Term we must come *to*, or the Point in our Spiritual Compass we must arrive *at*, when the Gospel-call prevails and enables us to *come*, may be opened in *Two Things* that clear it, particularly, *A Believing close* with the Gospel-Invitation, and an *obedient accepting* the Gospel-Entertainment.

1. *A Believing Close with the Gospel-Invitation.* When the Soul comes, it is drawn with a Full consent to Christ; the Understanding is enlightned, the Will persuaded, the Affections are drawn forth, and the Soul doth not any longer draw back. When the Snare is broken, and the Cords that held it back are cut, the Soul comes pressing forwards, towards the *High-calling of God*: when 'tis loosned of its wonted Hold, it complies, and begins a close with that Blessed Person of the Son of God that calls it. *Heb. 10. 39.* For we are not of them that draw back unto perdition, but of them which believe unto the saving of the Soul. When our more than a *Threefold Cord* is broken, then a call prevails, and we are drawn in *Bands of Love* to Christ. We can (thro' Grace) take hold of Christ, when He hath loosned our Knots that ty'd us so close to other Things before. Oh! if we come once to be like that *Band of Men whose Hearts God had touched*, we shall be even prickt to the Heart, we did not come sooner, and be earnest to dispatch our close with Jesus Christ the faster. We shall then to purpose sincerely mind his Calls, and evince our Hearty closing with them; not answering

Phil. 3. 14.

Eccles. 4. 12.

1 Sam. 10. 26.

Acts 2. 37.

swering like that *Second Son* we read of,
 that was bid to *go work in the Vineyard*,
 but play'd the Hypocrite and never came
 there, *I go Sir, and went not* ; but like the
First, tho' obstinate a while, yet at last o-
 bedient, that *afterwards repented and wem*,
 v. 29. When the Soul *closes*, it is glad of
 an Errand to *come* for any thing to Christ,
 as before it was glad of a shift, and sought
 an excuse, to keep it off from him. Lo !
 now it will not be satisfied with a *Call*,
 if the Soul but suspects it doth not *come a-*
way. Oh Blessed, Sweet and Gracious,
 Universal Change ! The Will consents
 unto the Invitation, *with the Heart the*
Man believeth, and with the Mouth the Poor
Soul confesseth, and lo ! a change wrought
 upon the Invited Sinner you may discern
 all over ! Oh ! how does the Soul press
 after the mark, when the Call of Jesus
 Christ prevails ! It is no sooner *loosned*
from Prison and from Death, but 'tis join-
 ed unto the Lord in Free-hold.

Matth. 21.
30.
Rom. 10.9

" I come Lord, I come with my Soul,
 " I desire to bring my *Body* in also. I re-
 " nounce my *Sins*, and now I seek a Sa-
 " viour ; I throw off *Satan*, and now I
 " put on the *Lord Jesus Christ* ; I come
 " out of my *Self*, Lord, whither shall I
 " go ?

"go ? I come to *thee* alone ; I flee from
 "the World, and with *the Wings* of a Psa. 55. 6.
 "Dove, by the Help of thy Spirit am
 "fleeing in to *thee* : I have chosen the way Psa. 119.
 "of *Truth*, I have cast mine Eye, my 30.
 "Feet are bent to *thee* : I am resolv'd by
 "the mighty Power of thy Grace to be
 "taken off, to be called away, to be seiz-
 "ed and stopt by none that calls, by none
 "that comes but *Thee*.

2. It is an obedient accepting the Gospel-
 entertainment : The Soul is willing to
 take the Provisions of the Gospel as they
 are, without any *murmuring* against the Mat. 20. 11
 Good man of the House. When the Soul
 comes to the Provisions of Christ, it is
 pleas'd in his House, delights in the en-
 tertainment, and takes without a Re-
 serve of any Dish he gives it. The Soul
 comes, when it will be at the Feast to
 meet with a Christ, and to feed on a
 Christ at every Opportunity ! when
 Souls are brought to accept of Divine
 Provisions, and cry out with an Holy
 Importunity, *Lord, evermore give us this* Joh. 6. 34.
Bread ! when the Soul takes up the very
 Fragments of the Bread of Life, and
 would have *nothing* lost that is ready
 among the *All Things*. To come, is to
 accept

accept of him that calls, and accept of what he offers, and comply with thy Lord who is ready to welcome and kindly accept of thee. "Lord, I come, here

¹Sam. 3. 6. "I am, for thou calledst me, (as Samuel said to Eli) and I never read thou sendst me back agen; I think my self happy to be a Guest, where the Master of the Feast that sent to call me, will be sitting by to serve me. Lord, I am come to seek my Meat of thee; I remember thy Kindness to call a poor Worm forth, and lo! here I am to

Prov. 9. 3. "eat of the Bread, and drink of the Wine which thou hast mingled. This coming of the Soul at the Gospel-call to Christ, is a Readiness (thus) to accept of the Glorious Things that are spoken of this Table, where these All Things are spread: for Glorious Things are spoken of the Supper as well as of the * City of our God.

* Psa. 87. 3. The Provisions of Grace are wonderful, as well as the Treasures that are laid up in Glory. And the coming of the Soul is to accept of such as these; untill it be filled with all the Varieties of the Word of the Kingdom, which God can bestow, or man receive of him.

Mat. 13. 19

The *Third Thing* is to enforce it by *Arguments*, and urge the *necessity* of man's coming at the *Call* unto these Holy *Communion* of the Gospel (for there is a *Communion* of Saints held at this Table.) And in evincing *why* it must be so, I would lay open the *Necessity* of the Thing these two ways in *General* : 1st. *Necessitate Præcepti*, as a Command. 2^{dly}. *Necessitate Medii*, as the Means appointed. It is no matter of *Indifferency*, other Things are *convenient*, but this *one Thing* is *needful*, Luk. 10. 42.

1. It is necessary, *necessitate Præcepti*, as the *Master of the Feast* requires it. It is his *command*, and that will render a *compliance* with it necessary. God hath bid you to a *Feast*, and it should not lye before you as a common, slight *indifferency*, if ye be disposed to go. The Command- 1 Cor. 10.
ment saith, *Seek ye the Kingdom of God* 27.
and his *Righteousness*, Matth. 6. 33. The Gospel-Dispensation is called the *Kingdom of God and his Righteousness* by a Phrase that is equivalent to and comprehensive of its Provisions made ready. Now this Provision in the Kingdom of God, God commands us to *seek*, and seek it † *first*; † *Potius quam Pri-*
seek it *rather*; let the Priority be in your *As-*
ns.

Affection, seek it *more* than all Things else. This is seeking first, when you give God's Provisions the *Preference* in your Hearts, tho' other Things have got the start, and were sought by you first in *Time*. Christ is there taking off his Disciple's Hearts and Thoughts from laying out their chief Care in maintenance about their *Bodies*, and setting them upon a more necessary Duty than Provision for their Body was. The Master of the Feast knows that the Soul is more than the Body, as the *Body* it self is *more than Raiment*, and therefore he commandeth his Disciples and Followers to be careful rather in This, and come away unto the Feast of the Gospel, seeking *Soul-Food*. It is the Will and Commandment of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we *serve not our own Belly*, but in obedience to his Divine Injunction, come and fill us with Hidden Gospel-Treasures. *Labour not for the Meat which perisheth*, *John 6. 27.* But doth not this *Negative* thwart a *Positive* command, *2 Thes. 3. 10. This we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat?* Doth not *Paul* a *Servant* of Jesus Christ seem to contradict our Lord Jesus Christ himself? I answer in the words of a clear
(f) Re-

Matth. 6.
25.

Rom. 16.
18.

(f) Reconciler of the Scriptures, No; (g) Streat's
for, "To live without a Calling is one ^{Dividing of}
"Thing, and to swallow up all Care for ^{the Hoof.}
"Heaven in this Earthly Calling is ano- ^{pag. 418,}
"ther. ^{419.}

*Labour not for the Meat which per-
isheth.] i. e.* Do not lay out your
Thoughts, nor spend your Time and Pains
about that Provision alone which is not
your chief Portion, as if your Happiness
consisted in the *Abundance of the Things*
that you possessed: but (it follows, la-
bour) *for that Meat which endureth unto*
Everlasting Life. Thus, he that hath pre-
pared his Dinner, *hath also bid his Guests,*
and therefore *necessity is laid upon us to go*
up unto this Feast. There is a necessity we
should partake of the Grace and plenty of
the Gospel, because God *hath required this*
at our Hands. It puts a *must* upon the In-
vited, and they cannot in point of Duty
refuse or put it off. We must in this be
all Servants, and *Ministers of his to do his*
Pleasure.

2. It is necessary *necessitate Medii*, as a
means of becoming Gospel Guests. * The * *Finis pri-*
means are first in *Execution*, and the end *us intentio-*
after. There must be a compliance with *ne, posteri-*
the Invitation before we can be called *us executi-*
Guests. The Provisions of the Gospel will *ons.*

be hid, until Men come and see by Faith what the Things are. *Coming*, which signifies a Conversion of the whole Man to God, is performed in the *first* place, and partaking of the Feast (or a feeding upon the Provisions of Grace that are made ready for the nourishment of the Soul in it's converted state) is brought about *after*. God first brings the Soul to *himself*, and then he *fills* it with *Good Things*. The Prodigal could not partake of the Fatted Calf, so long as he was absent from his Father's House ; it was therefore necessary (as a means of receiving it) that he should come away and be with his Father where he was. *I will arise and go to my Father, and say, Father, I have sinned against Heaven and before Thee, Luke 15. 18.* But this necessity of coming as a Means will appear Three ways.

1. It is necessary to come to the Gospel-Entertainment, *because all our Labours cannot purchase Bread. Isa. 55. 2, 3. Wherefore do ye spend Money for that which is not Bread, and your Labour for that which satisfieth not ? Hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is Good, and let your Soul delight it self in Fatness ; incline your Ear and come unto me, hear and your Soul shall*

(shall live. Here are plainly Two Feasts spoken of in opposition ; *God's* Entertainment which he provides for *Sinners*, and *Sinner's* Entertainment which they provide for *themselves* at their own charges ; now the Poor Sinner so long as an awakened Conscience sets him on Works and the Duties of Obedience, but never looks to Christ, he sweats, he labours, lays down a Price, and pays dear for nothing, *he spends Money for that which is not Bread*; all the poor Creature doth, or can possibly reach to, is infinitely short of Christ, he makes a *Feast* of his Duties, but when he comes to sit at Table wants *Bread* to eat. Alas ! he must hearken to *another* Provider, before he will get supplies ; he must come and taste of *God's Bounty*, before he will ever fill his Belly ; *hearken diligently unto me, incline your Ear, and come.* If we come not to this Plenteous Feast of the Gospel, we may strive and take much Pains, but all our Reward will be *Husks* with the Swine, instead of *Bread* with God's Children. We may stir, we may strive in a way of outward working, but if it be out of Jesus Christ, we are Poor and can't maintain our selves. We may

look upon one another, as we read of *Jacob's* Sons, when there was Corn in *Egypt*; but if we will live by Bread, we must go for Food to *Joseph*. All the Plenty in the Land of *Egypt* was deposited in *Joseph's* Granaries, not a Sack could be fill'd tho' it came from his *Fathers House* in *Canaan*, but it must come thro' *Joseph's* Hands; then *Joseph* commanded to fill their Sacks with Corn. So there is a necessity we should come to the Son of God for Food, because all is lodg'd with Him, * *Treasures*, † *Fulness*, while all our Labours will not purchase Bread. Again,

v. 25.

* Col. 2. 3.

† Joh. 1.

16.

2. It is necessary to secure our Souls from Starving. We perish with Hunger, if we do not come for Food. We must have Bread to preserve our Lives, and yet we can have it no where else but here. As our Bodies would starve, if our necessary Food were gone, so will our Souls, and the Souls of others under our charge, if we do not take a little Food for the Famine of our Households, to supply us and them. We must come forth to this Rich, Gospel-Feast, where there is no want of any Thing (as the old Man that came out of the Field from his Work at Even, *Judge*

19. 16. told the way-faring *Levite* in the Street of *Gibeah*, v. 19. latter part,) if we would not have our selves, and all that is within us come to want. No other Table hath Vertue enough to preserve our Souls, but that which the *Redeemer* of our Souls hath furnisht. No Bread will sustain us, but the Bread that came down from Heaven, and no Feast but the Gospel-Feast alone.

Why sit we here until we die was the Language of those four Leprous Men that were ready to perish with Hunger at the entring of the Gate of *Samarita*, 2 Kings 7. 3. last words. They could not live in so Black a Famine as we read preavailed, Chap. 6. 25. where an *Asses Head* (in this extremity, perhaps not common, yet Legally *unclean*) was sold for *four score pieces of Silver*, i. e. (g) If we compute those Pieces by the common Estimation, or the common Shekel, which was half the value of the Shekel of the Sanctuary, and reckoned at Fifteen pence, then being multiplyed Eighty Times will amount to Five Pound, as the Price of an *Asses Head* in that extraordinary Famine. And (it follows) *the fourth*

(g) See Mr. Pool's Engl. Annotations in loc.

(h) The *Kab* answers to our Quart. Dr. Ful-
ler's *Pisgab*-figt. p. 399.
(mispag'd on the other
side 397).

כק This contained
24 Eggs, and held pro-
portion with our Quart.
Goodwyn. *Moses and Aa-
ron*. lib. 6. Hebr. Mea-
sures, p. 262.

See also *Weymje Hebr.
Weights and Measures*.
Vol. I. p. 136, 137.
But

Others think this mea-
sure by Egg-shells must
be very uncertain, be-
cause of the Dispropor-
tion to be found in Eggs;
and therefore are not so
exact, to adjust the
measure to our Quart.
Saith one,

*This way of dealing
with Eggs in measures, I
doubt will make nine mea-
sures of ten prove addle.
Leo's Temple of Solomon,
pag. 110.*

Part of a (h) *Kab* (which was
the least Hebrew-measure)
of *Dove's Dung*; i. e. no more
of this Dung neither for Food,
than they say could be con-
tain'd in six Egg-shells, that is,
the fourth part of once 24.
(24 being reckoned the entire
measure of the *Kab*); and
these six Egg-shells of Dung
too at no lower rate than five
Pieces of Silver, or, as is esti-
mated according to the value
of our *English* Coins at 6 s.
and 3 d. Well, (this *Durum
Telum, necessitas*) this mighty
strait makes these four Le-
prous Men resolved to quit
their Post in the Gate, and
venture out into the Camp of
their very Enemies, to find
better *Quarters*. They had
starv'd, if they had not sought

supplies, or had lookt that the *Stones* of
their Gate should be turned into Bread. In-
deed these Distressed Hungry Lepers must
be fain to put it to the *issue*, as the Histo-
ry relates, whether they should get their
Bread upon the Place where they agreed

to go forth. They are not *Invited* to any Entertainment, but must venture upon their Enemies Swords to get *their Bread with the Peril of their Lives*. But lo! necessity spurr'd them on. Why sit we here until we *die*, was Argument enough to venture any where to live! Lam. 3.9.

Why, so there is the same *necessity* for our coming to the Gospel-Entertainment. We *die*, if we have not this Feast, this Food to keep our Souls *alive*! And lo! we are more abundantly encouraged to seek our Bread than *They*! These *Lepers* sought it of Bloody *Syrians*, we may of a Saviour that hath shed his own Blood for us. *They* of their Enemies, and *we* of the best Friend we have. They ventured to the King of *Syria's* Camp, we may approach to the King of *Sion's* Court. They ventured without *inviting*, we are *bid* to come. And shall we not go? shall we not gird up our Loins and run? *Is there* 1 Sam. 17.
not a Cause? And shall we starve our 29.
Souls to indulge our sitting still? We have nothing left by Nature, no *Bread* 1 Sam. 21.
under our Hand to feed us, and tho' we are 4.
Prodigals that have wasted our *first* Allowance, we cannot find our *second* Keeping in any far Countrey, or upon the
Husks

Husks that any Swine do eat. We must be nourisht in the King's Household, under the Roof of his Loving Kindness, or we pine, and die in the open Field with Hunger! Oh! wo unto us, we are undone, if we make not out to our Father! There's a mighty Famine in the Land, and we are *Strangers in the Earth*, and from below we have neither inward Grace, nor outward open Vision. And is it not necessary we should come? Shall we slight a Feast of Plenty? Shall we *hear* the Calls, shall we *smell* the Entertainment, shall we *see* the Provisions served up before us? And yet shall we hear, shall we see? Shall we do any Thing but *come and taste that the Lord is good?*

Psa. 119.
19.

Psa. 34. 8.

3. Lastly. It is necessary to come, to **maintain** the *Healthful and Vigorous Constitution of the Soul, with the nourishment of Grace continually.* Coming to the Gospel Feast is necessary not only to preserve our *Life*, but to encrease our *Strength*, which is also one of the Proximate and Immediate Ends of *Eating*, according to Eccles. 10. 17. *Blessed art thou O Land, when thy (i) Princes eat in Due Season, for*

(i) Inferiour Rulers
and Officers of State.
Femle. Analytical Exposition of Ecclesiastes. p. 333.

(k) Strength

(k) *Strength, and not for*

(l) *Drunkenness.* As the Ta-

bles of the Greatest *Men* should

be spread to no other *end* than

the Refreshment and Supplies

of *Nature*, so the Table of our

Great God must be furnished, and we par-

taking of it, as a *means* of Nourishment

and Encrease of *Grace*. If we would have

strength in our Souls, we must come to

the Provisions where our *great strength* Judg. 16 5

lies. When Grace hath put a new, Health-

ful *Constitution* into the Soul, it procures

a Diet to preserve that same Blessed *Tem-*

per. If we would be strong and lively,

and *wait upon the Lord to renew our strength*, IIa. 40. 31.

if we would *mount up with Wings as Eagles*,

if we would *run and not be weary*, and walk

and *not faint* in our Journey towards the

New Jerusalem, as the Holy Ghost hath

promised, and spoken by the Mouth of

his Servant *Isaiah*, *Isa. 40. 31.* we must

come to a Feast that hath *Healthy Diet*

in it. 'Tis by *means* we obtain the *End*.

Waiting, running, walking, as the Means,

before strength and not fainting as the

End. Would you be *strong in the Lord*? Eph. 6. 10.

you must first accept of his Invitation,

and partake of *strong* (that is Soul-streng-

thening)

(k) *Ad Corporis robur
& animi vires, ut vivant
& valeant* Cartwright.
Homil. in Ecclef.

(l) *Ad reficiendum, non
ad Luxuriam.* Mercer.

thening) *meat*. This is the way by which you may come to be *strengthened with all might according to his Glorious Power*, Col. 1. 11. So much for the *Doctrinal Part*.

IV. The Last Thing is the *Use*, only in some Few Truths we may learn from it.

1. *Inf.* If we must *Come*, Oh! what need then of the Spirit of God to *bring us*! we need a Real *Aid*, and a mighty, wise and holy *Guide* with us. We must have a Principle of Internal, Spiritual *Assistance* wrought by the Holy Ghost, first to enlighten our *Ignorance*, and then to strengthen our *Impotence*: we cannot *stir*, if the Spirit do not *strive* with us. *Psal.* 143. 10. *Thy Spirit is Good, lead me into the Land of uprightness.* I must come, Lord, to thy Table, I must see what

(m) *Da i-* House thou keepest for me; (m) "Grant
gitur fidum " me therefore thy Spirit to be my Sure
illum du- " and Faithful Guide to thee, who will
cem, qui non " not only take me by the Hand, but af-
prehendat " ford me sufficient Strength and Motion,
tantum ma- " as the Pious and Learned *Rivet* glosseth
num, sed vi- " it. *The Spirit that Quickneth* must give
res sufficiat, " it. *The Spirit that Quickneth* must give
& motum. " it. *The Spirit that Quickneth* must give
Rivet. in Life and Motion, *Legs to the lame*, and
loc. vol. 2. Feet to walk with them. *If the Spirit of*
Joh. 6. 63. *him that raised up Jesus from the Dead dwell*
in you, *He that raised up Christ from the*
Dead

Dead shall also quicken your Mortal Bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Rom. 8.

11. (n) The Spirit must be our *Auxiliary* (n) Char-
upon Earth, as well as *Christ* our *Advocate* nock's Dis-
in Heaven. As we can never be obedient courses. Vol.
to the Truth till we come to the God of 2. p. 1321.
Truth that calls us, so we can never come
to be thus obedient, till there be an *obeying*
of the Truth thro' the Spirit, 1 Pet. 1. 22.
He may call, he may command, *This is the*
way, walk ye in it, but we can never run
the way of his Commandments, till He en-
large our Hearts, Psal. 119. 32. For 'tis AGS 17.28
in him that we live and move, and have our
Being Spiritually, as well as Naturally, both
are from him, because all our Springs are
in Him. We must have our motion from
him, before we can make any motion to
him. A moving Principle to cause our
Pace, or we shall either stand still, or start
back, or turn aside, or tumble down, or
stumble in our walk, when we try to
come along.

2. Inf. God's Calling and Man's Coming
are not the same, but Two Distinct Things.
'Tis His Grace, but 'tis our Work and
Duty; He draws, but 'tis we must run,
Cant. 1. 4. Draw me, we will run after thee.
The Call is often sent, when there is no
coming

coming *seen*. Christ oft invites, but Men too oft refuse. He holds out a *Sceptre of Grace*, but They remove the *Shoulder*, and will not stretch out one Hand to take it. Calling is the Act of *God*, Coming is the Duty or the Act of *Man* in the received strength of God. *God's* Act in calling often goes alone, but *our's* never doth so, because it is impossible tho' God calls of *himself*, that we should come *alone*. These Two then must be distinguished, *God's* Calling and *Man's* Coming; neither must Man deceive himself to think he comes, because God calls him. For he may be no *Guest* after God hath *given*, and a Man hath *had* a Gracious Invitation. The Invitation may be made on *God's* Part, and yet no compliance seen on *Man's*.

3. *Inf.* There may be also *much* coming to Ordinances, and *little* coming unto God with any Spiritual motion in them. Alas! there be many Foolish Guests, that follow their own Spirit, and rather come at their own call than *God's*. They bid themselves, and so come in the *Flesh*, but never understand what to make of a motion in Spirit and in Truth to God. They hear not with Spiritual Distinction the Voice of the Son of God, but with a Con-

fusion

fusion and Disorder the Flesh makes, and therefore can't come, but rather from some Forcible external Cause are brought, without any Life in them. You may be going *from* the Feast in a *Spiritual* Sense, when you are seen to come *to* it in the *Literal*. The Heart must be *upright*, or you will come all *awry* in a crooked Line with the workers of Iniquity, while you appear in these Duties. You know what was said of *Ezekiel's* Hearers, *Ezek. 33. 31. They come unto thee as the People cometh, and they sit before me, as my People, and they hear thy words, but they will not do them, for with their Mouth they shew much Love, but their Heart goeth after their Covetousness.* (o) They carried it *well* to the Prophet, but very *ill* to God. They would *throng* to their Preacher, but be easily *thrust away* from God. They stood before the Prophet as if they had *put on* the same Ornament of the Mind which the best of God's Children *wear*; but yet God saw, their *Hypocrisie* stood before him *naked*. So you may seem to *come*, when your Heart goeth after your Covetousness. You may come and make such a *Dust* with the Earth about you, while you *put out the Eye* of Faith, that you see not where you are.

(o) *Judei magnā frequentiā ad Prophetam concurrerant. Et coram illo non secūs consistebant, quā si animū planē induissent populo Dei dignū.*
Jun. in loc.

4. *Inf.* If God invites us by the Gospel-Call, *other Invitations should be of less account with us.* When the Law of Mercy in the Gospel requires us to come and eat, shall the Law of Cruelty in our Members be obey'd, that saith, *Abstain from Meats?* It casts a Disparagement upon the great God, that *his* Call must be neglected, while other little calls are minded; that you have an Ear open to let in the Persuasions (suppose) of a *Mortal Man*, while you stop it against your *Maker!* wilt thou stay with the *Swine*, when thou art Invited to the *Sheep-folds* to lye down in green Pastures? Canst thou raise an Objection against the *Sequel*, because the *Antecedent* is so clear, *Arise, He calleth thee?* 'Tis the Voice of a God and not of a Man, of the *God of the Spirits of all Flesh* that calls thee, and shall the Voice of a Creature, the Voice of a Dying Man, or the Voice of a Condemned Malefactor stop thee? *Who hath hardened himself against him and hath prospered?* Job 9. 4.

5. *Inf.* It is an Aggravation of our *Trespass* against Love and Kindness, to turn our Backs upon the High-calling of God. This is a *Prodigious Evil*, tho' Men have *Presuming Thoughts* upon it. This *Rebellion*

bellion (this Refusal to come to Court when sent for) is as the *Sin of Witchcraft*, and *Stubbornness* is as *Iniquity and Idolatry*, 1 Sam. 15. 23.

6. *Inf.* It is such a Sin to stand it out against God's Calls, as God will severely punish. A neglect of God's Calls will make our own Cries unpitied. Prov. 1. 24, 25, 26. *Because I have called, and ye refused, I have stretched out mine Hand, and no Man regarded, but ye have set at nought all my Counsel, and would none of my Reproof, I also will laugh at your Calamity, I will mock when your Fear cometh.* Such as refuse the **Load-stone**, and are not drawn with Mercy, shall have a **Millstone** ty'd about their Necks that will make them sink for ever. Such as would not be call'd shall be cast into Hell.

7. *Inf.* and last. The Invitation of the Gospel should find in us a suitable compliance with it. I say a suitable or a meet compliance. As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, (so walk ye to him) so walk ye in him. Col. 2. 6. For instance, the Grace of this Blessed Invitation should make us Gracious under it. The Freeness of this call should make us ready of our own accord, and not find, or rather not leave us,

like those that are *drag'd* by others to every good word and work. The *Soveraignty* of the call should *dissolve our Stone*, and bring it unto Christ in *Dust and Asbes*. The *clearness* of the Invitation should leave no dispute about it. The *Authority* of the Call should meet with no *Denial*. The *openness* of the Thing should make us less *asham'd* of Christ; we should have more *Boldness* in our Profession, when we are bid with such a *Publick* Invitation. We need not be *Timorous* or *Afraid* of what we go about, to come either by Night with a *Nicodemus*, or by Day that no Eye should see us. The *Largeness* of the Invitation should *take hold* of us. The *Earnestness* of the offer requires us we do not *trifle* with it. The *Solemnity* of the Call enjoins us not to *jest* with it. The *Sincerity* of it requires, that we do not hear a little, and pray a little, and then go away, and sin much for it. In one word, the *Seasonableness* of the Gospel-call requires us *while it is yet Day* to come. If God calls us in the Day of *Prosperity*, we should not stay till the Day of *Adversity* to consider it. If in the Day of *Health*, *Peace*, *Strength* or *Liberty*, we must not delay till *Sickness*, *Calamity*, *Weakness* and

and Restraint. If in the *Days of our Youth* he makes the Invitation, we must remember our Creator before the *Evil Days* Eccl. 12. 1. come. If he calls us in the *Day of Life* we must not loiter 'till the *Night of Death*. To conclude, whenever he calls us in the *Day of Grace*, while the Spirit breaths and blows upon us, we must come, least we *Quench the Spirit*, and provoke him to blow out our *Light*, that the *Things of our Peace* shall be ever *hid* from us.

Doct. *That the Gospel is a Feast or a Supper. in which all its Provisions are Now ready.* III.

In the handling of this *Proposition* there will be only these *Three Things* to do.
1. To Open; 2. To Prove; and 3. To Apply it.

The *First Thing* will be to *Open* it, and unfold this *Present Readiness* coucht under the word **Now**. I.

There is a *Twofold Readiness* in the *Marriage-Supper of the Gospel*; the *one* is *Absolute* in the *Provider*, as all its *Provisions* are now got, *I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do*, Joh.

17.4. lat. pt. This hath been largely discours'd already. The *other* is a *Respective* Readiness, being a reference unto Men, as these Provisions are now ready to be *had*. It is the *latter* kind of Gospel-Readiness which I must here speak of. This may be opened under a *Threefold* Regard. 1. To Place. 2. To Time. And 3. Opportunity.

1. The Supper of the Gospel is now ready for the *Place* where the Gospel comes. In every Nation, Town, Family, where an Evangelical Message arrives, God's Heralds may proclaim the Supper now ready, *Isa. 65. 1. I said, behold me, to a Nation that was not called my Name.* It is now ready for this Quarter of the World, for these Nations, for our own Native Countrey, for the *Inbitants of this Isle*, for the Town in which we are, or the obscure Villages to which any of us may belong, *Act. 10. 35. In every Nation he that feareth him, and worketh Righteousness, is accepted with him; i. e.* It doth not suppose there can be any Acceptable Fear of God, or Works of Righteousness in any Nation where the Gospel was never Preacht, for these must be the Fruits and Effects of

of the Gospel it self; but the meaning is, in every Nation where the Gospel comes and *produceth* this Fear, and these works of Righteousness, not *finds* them *antecedently*, there the Gospel is now ready to instate them with all true Happiness in God's Acceptation. The Supper is now ready for any Place whither the King sends forth a Messager, tho' it be in the *Hedges* and the *High-ways*, where Luk. 14. 23 poor Sinners are *cast out into the open* Ezek. 16. 9 *Field*.

2. The Supper of the Gospel is now ready for the *Age* or Particular Time of the World in which the Gospel comes: It is Preached unto the Generation that now is, and therefore ready for them that are now upon the Stage, and do hear it from the *House-tops*, or from the Luk. 12. 3. Pulpit-Top in *our* Gospel-Day. The Generation that is come up, and stands over the Graves of their Ancestors, are acquainted with the Voice of Preaching, and many Thousands in the World do now *live, when God doth this*. Behold, Num. 24. 23. the Mysteries of the Gospel are by Preaching now made known. Dark Ages of Popery, and the Brightest Ages of Judaism saw not what *we* see. The Light

shined thro' a *Vail* to the Church of old, and as for our Pagan Ancestors their Lot was cast in such a Midnight-Darkness, that *neither Sun, nor Moon, nor Stars*, nor any Light appeared. But in *our Age* *the People that sate in darkness, have seen great Light*. There were in the *Apostle's Days*, as he takes Notice, *Eph. 2. 7: The Ages to come* that God would look after, that *he might shew them the Exceeding Riches of his Grace, in his Kindness towards us through Christ Jesus. Ages to come.*] (p) The *Ancients* do interpret these Ages of which the *Apostle* speaketh, of that *Eternity of Ages* in the Future State which is to follow after the Dissolution of the World ; but *others* refer the Scope of the *Apostle's* meaning unto the *after-ages of this World*. Dr. Goodwyn thinks (q) the *Apostle* had *both* Senses in his Eye, and therefore professeth (the Reasons for both being so cogent) that if one Stream of these Interpretations should be exclusive of the other, he should hardly know which to prefer. However it be, it doth not exclude a shewing forth the Riches of his Grace to *us* that live so many Ages *since* the *Apostle's Days* ; for *We* now, thro' Mercy,

A^{ct}. 27. 20.

Math. 4. 16

(p) Chrysostomus,
Ambrosius,
Hieronymus, &c. ad
futurum se-
culum refe-
runt. Bodi-
us in loc.

(q) Dr.
Goodwyn's
Works,
Vol. 2. pt.
2d. see
him from
p. 236. to
p. 248.

Mercy, do find our own (tho' otherwise miserable enough) to be one of those happy, Golden Ages. Our Gospel now (tho' Hid to them that are lost) is the Revelation of the Mystery, which was kept secret since the World began, but now is made manifest, — Rom. 16. 25, 26. The Apostle also speaks of it to the same purpose elsewhere, Col. 1. 26. Even the Mystery which hath been hid from Ages, and from Generations, but now is made manifest to his Saints. Alas! how many Ages before Christ were filled up with Generations of Men from whom the Mystery in Christ was hid! (r) All the Light before Christ, was but Moon, or Star-light, designed only for the Night preceding, (as that famous Apologer cited in the Margent observeth in a Learned Tract.) And it must needs be a Thick Darkness upon the *Pagan* World, while the Divine Light did but faintly shine in *Goshen*. God's own People had but some *Prelibations* and Fore-tasts so early, not a full Gospel-meal: Holy Diet was more sparing, tho' they were fed with never so many slain Beasts, both in the *Morning* and at *Noon*; because the Chief Meal in the Day of Grace at the Supper of our God

(r) Dr. Burythogg, *Causa Dei*, p. 195.

was not then come. But *we* under the Gospel may say now ready, even we of this *Age* to whom the Gospel is Now come. *We are but* indeed of yesterday upon the Earth, and our *Span* will reach but a little way, tho' it extendeth *most upwards*; yet no sooner did the *Day-spring* from on high visit our Quarters, but God sent in *Provision* with it. *We come in a Good Day* that are born at the *Hour* of Supper. We are come forth into this World a little before Night, and just as the Gospel hath met us, *reeking* in our Pollution, and lying *in our Blood* as it passeth by, the Grace of it unto *us* may be dated *now ready*. It is ready for poor Dark Families, that have been *full of the Habitations of Cruelty*, and Dark Souls, even now when God springs in with Light, and reformeth *the Times of this Ignorance*, which before he winked at, coming now in the Preaching of the Gospel to *command* them *every where* to *repent*, Acts 17. 30. *And the Times of this Ignorance God winked at.*] There was a Time when the Nations were in the Dark, and God took no Notice of them; he * *overlookt* them, as the Word is, he had not an Eye of Mercy for them, but
lookt

* *over-*
lookt.

lookt over *their* Dark Times to instruct *other* Ages in the Knowledge of Saving Truth; so we have a *Paralel* Testimony given us, *Acts* 14. 16. *Who in times past suffered all Nations to walk in their own ways.* * *In times past* he did so, that is, in

the Ages and Generations of Men that are gone, such whom Time hath now carried us off a great way from: But God hath now alter'd the Case in Mercy, and tho' he did shut his Eyes on *Them*, and righteously wink and overlook them, yet his Eyes are not contracted at *this Day*, but he opens and graciously fixeth them to look full on *us*. And now commandeth all Men

every where to repent.] That is, the Times in which the Gospel comes, are the Times in which a People do receive the Grace of God in Christ, and therefore God looks to such, and expects they should be *Times of Reformation*. Well, the Gospel is now ready for *you* of this Age, when God hath taken that which letteth out of the way, be it any obstruction whatsoever, and it comes in the Preaching of it to you: 'Tis now ready to give *understanding unto the simple*, when God perceives of most of *you*, that you are ignorant and unlearned Men, and hereby will

* εν ταῖς
παρωχαι-
ναις ἡμε-
ραις.

Heb. 9. 10.

will have your poor Ignorant Neighbours, and your Carnal Kindred and Acquaintants, who it may be will not be persuaded to come along with you, *take Knowledge that you have been with Jesus.* He sends the Light of the Gospel among you, to acquaint you with *the Things of your Peace*, which perhaps you had lived all your Days in the World (some of you) and never knew till now. 'Tis now ready to regenerate and save such of you as have been Dead and Lost until now; the Gospel hath been excellently made known by many a Saint that is now Dead, and now in the Grave, and yet *speaketh*, whose Testimony agreeth with some that *are alive and remain*, that now confirm the same Gospel also. You have Great Things that have been made known in *this Age*, I speak particularly of this *17th Century* since Christ; whereas our Ancestors in some Ages and Generations past were nurs'd up universally in the Darkeness of *Popery*, and again before that in the blackest Shades of (f) *Paganism*, and never had a Glimpse of the True Light that now shineth, or a Taste of the Supper now ready.

(f) See
Verstegan's
Antiquities.
Chap. 3.
from p. 73.
to p. 89.
(mibi) 8°
Edit. 1673.

3. The Supper of the Gospel is now ready in regard of the *opportunity*, or special *season* now afforded *us*. Opportunity is that happy juncture which (1) one ex-
 presseth thus, "The Spiritual Market-day for the procuring of saving Provisions for our Souls, upon which we are to live for ever. The original expresseth the *opportunity* of Time by a Distinct word, 1 Cor. 7. 29. We translate it the *Time* is short, but the * Greek *
 readeth it The *opportunity* is short ; it is not *χρόνος*. I shall consider this (τὸ νῦν, this *Punctum Temporis*, or) present Readiness of the Gospel, according to the Season, under a *Five fold Division*.

(1) Jenkyn, Supplement to the Morning Exercise. pag. 92. Sect. 7.

* ὁ χρόνος * τὸ νῦν

1. Now ready, *while Life now continues*, Life is in a continual Lapse, it is a Thread that slips, and hath nothing but a succession of present Moments that like Points hold it together in continuity ; now we have no more properly for our *Season* than these instant Points, or Moments: We can say only of Time past, it *was*, of Time to come, it is *not* ; and therefore it remains only that we possess the Time that *now is*. Life consequently is a *going*, and the work of it for our Souls must be done,
 can

Punctum est quod vivimus.

- can be only done, while Time's a *lasting*.
 John 9. 4. *I must work the works of him that hath sent me, while it is Day, the Night cometh, when no Man can work.* The Night of your Departure is at hand, and drawing on apace in which you can neither eat, nor see to walk, or work ! Now (you hear) is but a *Point*, and 'tis always *Pas-sing*. Life never standeth still, the Time is short if we measure it from one end to the other with our common Span. Alas!
- Gen. 5. 27. what is *Methuselah's* Age to Eternity ?
- Psa. 90. 10. And what is *Threescore years and Ten* to *Methuselah's*, and what is *to Morrow*, that we cannot *boast of*, to *Threescore years and Ten* ! And yet we have but such a short and uncertain season of Life to come and receive Mercy in. Mercy (if we refuse
- Psa. 23. 6. it) can but *follow us all the days of our Life*, tho' often Mercy steps back, and leaves a Sinner to himself sooner, and doth not follow him (I speak of the offers of Saving Mercy) to his Live's end. However, *after Death*, if the Time of Life be *slipt*, in the *Grave* there will be no
- Psa. 6. 5. *Remembrance* of us, the Gospel can be only ready for us now, before we are like
- Psa. 88. 5. *the Slain that lye in the Grave*, whom it remembreth no more. Well, but now
 Life

Life continues, and there is some capacity of Improvement, some Help and a Possibility of Recovery by the means of Grace. It is said of *him that is joined to all the Living there is Hope*, Eccles. 9. 4. We are now thro' the Merciful Providence and Good Hand of our God, Living Men; Nch. 2. 8. God hath not yet rooted us out of the Land of the Living, where our Place shall know us no more, but we may yet (thro' Mercy) walk before him in the Light of the Living. Isa. 52. 5. Job 7. 10. Psa. 56. 13. The Angel hath not yet Sworn it in our Hearing, even the Messenger of Death by a Sentence of Death within us, 2 Cor. 1. 9. that Time shall be no longer; but God hath spar'd us to recover Strength, after many a Humbling Visitation that had brought, Rev. 10. 6. and once kept us low. He hath rais'd us, when we were fallen upon a Sick-bed, and did not know whether ever we should come down from that Bed on which we were gone up, but might surely die. This is therefore the Season unto **us** who are all here present before the Lord, because Life continues with us, and to us whom he hath granted Life and Favour in a Recovery from Sickness, and his Visitation Job 10. 12 that hath preserved our Spirit.

2. Now ready, when Grace is now offered.

ed. This may be opened in *Two Things*.

1. Now, when Crace is offered unto *Saints* to comfort them that mourn in *Sion*. 2. Now, when Grace is offered unto *Sinners* to bring them in to Christ.

1. These Provisions are Now ready, when Grace is offered unto *Saints*, to comfort them that Mourn in Zion. The Soul that thinks it hath had a *Repulse*, yet shall not like *Jordan*, now be driven back; tho' thou hast cry'd out of a Denial in *Months past*, yet thou shalt not be deny'd thy Supper, or kept without it Fasting, when Grace is now offer'd. We do not only hear of the Kingdom, but if we believe, it is our *Father's good pleasure to give us the Kingdom*, that we might eat and drink in it, *Luke 22. 29, 30. And I appoint unto you a Kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my Table in my Kingdom.* There is now the offer of a Gift to Saints in *whatsoever* of Spirituall they may be profitted withal; Christ hath commanded that something should be given them, as he did unto *Her* that was heal'd, to eat. Tho' thou hast been afraid, that Christ did frown upon thy coming heretofore, yet lo! now he cometh unto the Table in a *Chariot Pav'd with*

Isa. 61. 3.
Psa. 114. 5.
Job 29. 2.
Luk. 12. 32
Mat. 15. 5.
Mark 5. 43
Song 3. 9.
10.

with Love, to meet thee ! Tho' thou hast cry'd under a sorrowful Spirit, he would turn thee out of Doors, yet lo ! now he puts forth his Hand *upon the Handles of the Lock*, to let thee in presently. This *Key of David* shall be turned *for*, and not *against* thee to make thee *lose thy Supper*. Grace is offer'd, Grace is now ready for thee ; thy Redeemer is entred into the *Chambers* of his Love upon a Blessed Feast-Day to *see* thee. When thou hast wept in secret, and in solitary Retirements sigh'd out thy Case, Christ hath heard the voice of thy mourning, and is still taken with it ; he loves the Musick that is made by the *Organs* which he himself hath chosen : see *Cantic. 2. 14. Oh my Dove, that art in the Clefts of the Rock, in the secret Places of the Stairs, let me see thy Countenance, let me hear thy voice, for sweet is thy voice, and thy Countenance is comely.* The Poor Soul may often be compared to the (u) *Frighted Dove* that runs into Holes, instead of flying in at the Windows to hide it self. Some fierce Temptation perhaps like a *Hawk* pursues thee, and thou like a Poor Dove for shelter art scar'd into a Hole to hide thee, and there thou lyest mourning in secret and durst not venture

Song. 5. 2.

Rev. 3. 7.

(u) See
Durham
upon the
Place.

ture forth ; well, however Grace is now offer'd, and tho' thou canst not *come* home of thy self, Christ hath sent to fetch thee ! Thou shalt now be guarded to come forth with others that are made to *fly as the*

Ma. 60. 8. *Doves to their Windows.* He will not abhor and reject, *or cast thee off*, but doth

Ecclef. 3. 5. remember that now is a *Time to embrace.* Christ listens to the complaint of the Frighted Soul, and is resolv'd to make it welcome. *Let me see thy Countenance, let me hear thy Voice ;* as much as to say, Come now into my Presence, venture to my Table's side, and see if I do not make thee welcome ! Ask what thou wilt and it shall be given thee, even double, to
Eft. 5. 3. *the half of the Kingdom.* For Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out, John 6. 37. latter part.

2. These Provisions in the Gospel are now ready, when Grace is offered unto Sinners, to bring them now in to Christ. There is a fit opportunity upon the offer of Mercy for Sinners to be made now welcome to it. Feasts are ready, when the Guests have an opportunity to go and be made welcome at them ; so the Gospel is then ready, when Sinners may have the Freedom to hear the Doctrines of Salvati-

on publisht ; it is *Then* for Sinners to listen after and lay hold of some Good Thing tender'd by the Lord God of *Israel*, when they hear the Name of the Lord proclaimed, even the Name *Immanuel*, Mat. 1. 23. *which is God with us ; being proclaimed, the Lord, the Lord God, Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth, Exod. 34. 6.* while he makes *all his Goodness* pass before us *in the* Exod. 33. 19. *Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* This is an opportunity to be made welcome ! So it is in the Preaching and Proclamations of it. A Sinner may be now accepted at this Blessed Entertainment, for it is called *an Accepted Time*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. A Time that God hath accepted for Sinners, and a Time in which he accepts also of them. The Gates of the Kingdom of Heaven are set wide open to receive Sinners now in. Jesus Christ now opens to let in every Sinner that comes to Him. The Gate of Mercy shall be lockt against none that have been knocking at it to come in.

Oh ! how fit is the Present opportunity for Sinners to be made welcome ! how cheerfully, how abundantly might they come and be refresh't at *the Solemn Feasts* ! Ezek. 46. 9

D d

Oh !

- Oh ! how readily is Christ now opening of the Treasures of his Grace and Love, to welcome Sinners to him ! What multitudes might there now step in, while
- Song. 2.4. *the Banquetting House* is open ! Oh ! why is it that there is but *one of a Family* and
- Jer. 3.14. *Two of a Tribe*, when you might with
- your Houses come in and be welcome to serve the Lord ? Why is it that so Few of
- Chap 50.5 you are *setting your Faces towards Sion*, even when *Sion's Provisions* are now ready ? Oh why is the Season *now*, slighted ?
- Heb. 3.15. Why is the opportunity, **To Day**, if ye will hear his Voice, neglected ? Oh ! why will you *die*, Sinners, when you might close with the Redeemer now, *according*
- Gen. 18.14 *to the Time of Life* ? Why will you be *Sick*, and yet shut the Door against the *Physician's* entrance now, when he would come with Grace and *Healing Love* to save you ? Why will you now be *Blind*,
- Rev. 3.18. when you might have *Eye-salve* to make you discern every Thing clearly ? *Is this*
- 2 Sam. 16. *your Kindness to your Friend* that would make you highly welcome ? For *behold now is the Day of Salvation, behold now is the Accepted Time*, 2 Cor. 6. 2. Never such an opportunity appear'd as the Day of Salvation is, and therefore it is *now* that

that *there is hope in Israel concerning this Thing*, Ezra 10. 2. last words. And this shews how the Provisions of the Gospel are ready in their *Season*, as there is a fit opportunity for Sinners to be made *now welcome* to them. So much for the second Branch of this Readiness *now in opportunity*, being now when Grace is offer'd.

3. Now ready, *when Ministers are now urgent*. They are now like *Phinehas*, zealous for their God, not to slay as He, but to save and present you alive at Supper. They are loth to see you *starv'd*, and so much *Victuals* ready, and therefore are earnest in calling out to bring you in to Christ. Their *Heart's Desire and Prayer*, Rom. 10. 1 their Tears and Travel, their Sermons, Study, Aim is, *that you may be saved!* Their Language is to *Sinners turn again now every one from his evil way*, Jer. 25. 4, 5. and 35. 15. Their Language is to Saints, *Oh taste and see!* They are *serious* and earnest towards *all*, Faithful Ministers dare *jest with none*. We *press* you to *believe our report* and come, if by any means we may see you but safe in at Supper. We *blow the Trumpet*, we ring the Warning Bell, to give you notice of Supper, that the Feast now is ready.

Numb. 25. 11.

Rom. 10. 1

Psal. 34. 8.

Isa. 53. 1.

Ezek. 33. 3

4. Now ready, *when God himself now waits to bestow Mercy on you.* It is your Duty to wait upon God, but such is God's Grace and Condescension that he is pleas'd to wait on you. *And therefore will the Lord wait, that he may be Gracious unto you; and therefore will he be exalted that he may have mercy on you, Isa. 30. 18.* He stoops that you may be made the means by which he will raise his own Name the higher. *He waits, that he may be Gracious.*] He gives space to repent, and does not break up House before the set Time is come. The King waits at the Supper-Hour to see his Guests in. *He hath limited a certain Day, Heb. 4. 7.* And he will stay his own Time he sets. As he hath constituted and set Bounds to a Sacred Day of rest (as that Place must be understood) which Bounds can never be broken up without a gross violation of the Morality of the Fourth Commandment; so he likewise limiteth the Day of his Grace and Patience towards Sinners, and he will not remove the Bounds he hath plac't by a Perpetual Decree to fence it. *He hath secretly fixt a waiting-time within his own Breast, and as he now waits accordingly, so he hath fixt a Time, when*

when he will never wait more. If thou dost not come in, Sinner, to this Supper, within the compass of God's waiting-time, he will not stay a Minute, and beseech or use one word of intreaty after ! ^{2 Cor. 5.}
 There is now silence in Heaven for *the* ^{20.}
space of half an Hour, now God seems to ^{Rev. 8. 1.}
 be making a Pause upon Mount Ebal, and will read no more Curses yet, that thou might'st hear more comfortably and distinctly what is said upon Mount Gerizim, ^{Deut. 11. 29.}
 to encourage thee to *ascend into this Hill of the Lord*, where the *Fat Things* wait upon the Mountain ready, till thou art brought thither. God now looks thro' the Pillar of the Cloud to see who comes ^{Exod. 14. 24.}
running by the way of the Plain, to get in ^{2 Sam. 18. 23.}
 at the *City of Refuge*, and thrust in at the *strait Gate to Table*, taking the Kingdom ^{Numb. 3. 13.}
of Heaven by a Holy Violence, now, now, ^{Mat. 7. 13.}
now before the Door is shut. ^{Matth. 25. 10, 11, 12.}

5. Now ready, *when the Spirit breathes and blows upon us.* For the Spirit of the Lord bloweth *when*, as well as the Spirit ^{John 3. 8.} *where* it listeth. As the Spirit of God in the first Creation did *move upon* ^{Gen. 1. 2.}
the Face of the Waters, or sit and hatch the Creature ; so in the *new* Creation under the Preaching of the Gospel, the Spirit

moves upon the Face of the Waters, or People, who often in Scripture are compared to * *Waters*, and forms † *Christ* in them. Now, when Men preach, and the Spirit helps the *Infirmity of our Flesh*, the Gospel is then made ready: For it is the Spirit that quickneth, the *Flesh profiteth nothing*, *Joh. 6. 63.* It is a Time of Readiness when God sends forth the Spirit of his Son, and proclaims it in your Hearts with a crying at the Table, *Abba, Father!* yea, when to one is given by the Spirit, the Word of Wisdom, to another the Word of Knowledge by the same Spirit, to another Faith by the same Spirit, to another Prophecie, to another discerning of Spirits; when the Spirit lifts up Ordinances and Means above their own Power, when the Spirit speaketh expressly in us, as well as the Language of the Messenger speaketh to us, and when we see by the Blessed Effects of it, the Spirit of God descending from Heaven, while the Word of the Kingdom comes in the Demonstration of the Spirit and with Power, then is the Blessed Season, the opportunity of the Gospel, the special Time of Supper, the now, when *All Things are ready.*

It is now when the Spirit breathes and blows

blows upon us. And lo! God now stretcheth forth his Hand, the Spirit makes some work in thy Soul that perhaps thou canst now witness, yea, must acknowledge it, *this is the Finger of God.* Exod. 8.
 Why, now then the Provisions are ready for thee, 'tis now a *Savour of Life* 2 Cor. 2. 15 to many, and 'tis now ready to get up Thee that art *Dead while thou livest.* 1 Tim. 5. 6
 The Spirit now *opens* some Eyes that never saw one Morsel of the Bread of Life before. It *reveals Mysteries unto Babes* which they never heard till now. Mat. 11. 25
 God's Word now is *Quick*, and *runs like the Lightnings* to find out the *Few Names in Sardis*; 'tis now *Powerful*, tho' we are *weak* that use it. 'Tis now *sharper than a Two-edged Sword*, and cuts when we do not see what is become of it out of *our Hands*! It was a *Dead Letter*, it may be, but *now a Quickning Spirit.* 1 Cor. 15. 45.
 The *Sword of the Spirit* makes its way, when *we* that handle it cannot make it enter. Oh! Now God goes forth with *the Chariots of Israel*, and *the Horsemen thereof*; he rides among some sturdy Sinners, unhorseth them, makes them acknowledge that *God is in his Ordinances of a Truth*, brings them to the Ground, *calleth them to his Foot*, when 1 Cor. 14. 25.
D d 4
they

they lye groveling in the Dust, and goes
 Rev. 6. 2. *forth Conquering and to Conquer.*

II.

The **Second** Thing is to *Prove* it, that the Gospel is a Feast, or a Supper, with all its Provisions now ready.

Reas. 1.

1. *The Guests of this Supper are now invited to it.* You have heard under the second Doctrine that God *calls* you to come and Sup with him. Now, it is a sure sign the Lord hath a *Supper*, as it was once that he had a *Bloody Sacrifice* of Destruction, *Zeph. 1. 7.* when he hath bid his *Guests*. It is now assuredly a Call to a *Wedding-Banquet*, because *the Spirit and the Bride say Come, Rev. 22. 17.* There is a *Feast*, for *the Children of the Bride-chamber* do not *fast* so long as they have got the Bridegroom the Lord Jesus Christ with them. It is ready, and *now* unquestionably, for the Elder Brother of the Family and his Servants have *invited all the King's Sons*, every one of the Children, *Sons and Daughters of the Lord Almighty*; *i. e.* all who are brought into such a Relation to him, are commanded to sit down as so many *Olive-Plants round about his Table*. This is therefore a Proof that his Provision is now ready for them.

2 Sam. 13.

23.

2 Cor. 6. 18

Psa. 128. 3.

2. The

2. The Supper of the Gospel is now ready, because *it is now in the Evening of the World Supper-Time*. The whole Time of the Gospel-Dispensation, if taken by it self from Christ's first unto his second coming, may be term'd as *one Entire Day*; and so the Apostle seems to intimate, as (w) some observe, in that Expression, *To Day, if ye will hear his Voice, Heb. 4. 9.* But yet if the Gospel-Time be *taken in* with the *other* Time that went on before Christ, then it may be called the *Evening of a Day*; and in this joint-consideration I now take it here, as the *Apostle* also doth, *1 Cor. 10. 11.* latter part. They are written for our Admonition upon whom *the Ends of the World are come*. The Gospel is the last Season, or the utmost Dispensation that Sinners will ever meet with to make Provisions of Mercy for them. *Grace* therefore in this Dispensation is well expressed in the *Parable* by a *Supper*; A Supper is the *last Meal*, and so is the Gospel the last Thing God hath to give you in the *Evening* of the World. The Food of these last Times indeed had been promis'd *early*, when God spake at Morning and at Noon what he would do for his People *before Night*,
for

Reas. 2.

(w) *To Day*, signifies now in the Time of his Appearance. Charnock. Vol. 2d. p. 1192.

for as the *Passeover* in another sence, so
 Lev. 23. 5. this is a *Feast to be kept at Even* ; and now
in the Evening of the World he doth give
 Exo. 16. 8. *us Flesh to eat.*

Besides, our *Now* is the latter part of
 the Day of God's *Patience* towards the
 World, and of his *Provision* and Grace
 towards *us* ; we live still *later* in the
 Evening, and lo ! in the *Evening* comes
 Gen. 8. 11. a *Dove with an Olive-Branch* to us. We
 are Borderers upon Eternity, and are as
 Acts 10. 6. near that *Ocean*, as *Simon* the Tanner
 that lodg'd by the *Sea-side*. Now then
 is our *Supper-time* ; for as now it is
Evening, so the *Night cometh* next : God
 therefore provideth his *Supper now*, be-
 cause he will have it to be in *Season* rea-
 dy for us. Hence is it that he may say,
 Isa. 37. 26. *Now have I brought it to pass*, not as *Sen-*
nacherib vaunted it in the *laying waste de-*
fenced Cities into ruinous Heaps, (no, that
 was a *Now* for *mischief*) but now hath
 Gen. 50. 20 he brought it to pass, *to save much Peo-*
ple alive, as at this Day ; and God hath
 now done it, because he would not,
 when we see a Full Congregation, *kill*
 Exo. 16. 3. *this whole Assembly with Hunger*, as the
 People in their Murmurings against *Mo-*
ses and *Aaron* complain'd unjustly. Well,
 God

God hath made ready the Provisions of the Gospel *now*, because he would fit them to our Entertainment now at *Supper-Time*; and therefore *they are Created Now*, and *not from the Beginning*. God maketh Supper ready, and we may say the **Hour** *now* is for entertaining us. When the *Age of the World is departed*, its *Day is far spent*, and the *End of all things is at hand*. Isa. 48. 7.
Isa. 38. 12.
Rom. 13. 12
1 Pet. 4. 7.

3. *Many Guests do now partake already.* Reas. 3.
There is a *Feast*, because so many eat and drink; the Supper is ready, because so many sit down. *I am the Door*, by me if any Man enter in he shall be saved; and shall go in and out and find pasture, Joh. 10. 9. There be many thro' Grace which have been brought into God's House thro' this *Door*, and set at God's *Table*. It is not only of our selves in these *Nations*, and these *Churches*, but there are *other Sheep* also which Christ hath, Joh. 10. 16. *that are not of this Fold*, and these also he hath taken Care of, to lodge and refresh in fat Pastures. The Gospel hath not only been profitable to some of you, but there hath been the Fruits of it that appear, thro' the Blessing of the Feaster, among other Gentiles also. Paul wit-

witneſſeth in *his* Day, that the *Romans* were not the only *Gentile-Hearers*, who had profited under his Ministry by the Entertainment, for he rather wiſheth that *They* might but reap as much Benefit by the Gospel, as *others* had done beſides, *Rom. 1. 13: — that I might have ſome Fruit among you alſo, even as among other Gentiles. Other Gentiles.*] Because others had been the *Seal of his Apoſtleſhip* elſewhere, he tells the *Corinthians*, *1 Cor. 9. 2.* that *ye* are ſo in the Lord; *i. e.* Partakers of the Benefits and the Graces of the Gospel as well as *you*. So that many Gueſts do partake, and have partook, and therefore this Supper's ready.

Reaf. 4: Laſtly, *After-Delays will prove too late to ſup*; and therefore it appears now ready. What will the Provision ſignifie (ſuppoſe to *us*) if we han't it now! what will a Supper avail, when our *Candle is out*, and we are *gone to Bed*! will the offers of Chriſt neglected *now*, become an Advantage when we are gone *hereafter*? if Death ſhould clinch our Hands, could we open them in the Grave, or the *Belly of Hell*, to cloſe with Jeſus Chriſt? 'tis *Sup* now, Cloſe now with Chriſt

Jonah 2. 2.

Christ and Welcome, God now accepteth thy Works ; but there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave whither thou goest, Eccles. 9. 10. There will be no feeding for Sinners upon Dainties, when Death shall feed on Them. In a word, no rising from their Beds, when they lye down and sleep in the Dust of the Earth, to come in again to Supper !

Psa. 49. 14.

Dan. 12. 2.

The Third and last Thing will be to Apply it, and the uses will be only Two. 1. Of Information to instruct, and 2. Of Exhortation to persuade.

III.

The First Use is of Information in these Thirteen following Points. If the Gospel is a Feast in which all its Provisions are now ready. Then

I.

1. We may learn of the Times and Seasons that the Father hath put them in his own Power. This is evidently cleared in those words of Christ wherewith he checkt his Disciple's Curiosity, Acts 1. 7. It is not for you to know the Times and the Seasons which the Father hath put in his own Power. The Present Readiness of this Supper argues, that the fixing and ordering of Times and Seasons for the Dispensing of Grace to Sinners, is solely in the Hands

1 Inf.

Hands of God, and at his Sovereign Disposal. It was an Act of *Sovereignty* to prepare the Gospel, and make it ready in the Time that *now* is. As our *Times* are *in God's Hand*, so are all our *Mercies*. It was decreed in his Sovereign Purpose, and fore-ordained *according to the Good* *Pleasure of his Will*, what Blessings of Grace should be the *Lot to be cast into our Lap* in the latter Ages. As there is a *Time to every Purpose, and to every Thing a Season*, so God is the Judge to dispose of it, and order every Thing in it. If the Master of the Feast had order'd it, his Supper had been ready before such a Time of Day, and he could have gotten courser Fare at Night. *He that spreadeth the Morning upon the Mountains* could have gotten up the Provisions early, even at the First break of Day, and at that *Breakfast* of the Promise made in the Garden of Eden to our First Parents, before he drove out the *Man*. But he was Sovereign, and would stay to bring in this till Supper.

Psal. 31. 15

Eph. 1. 5

Prov. 16.

33.

Ecclef. 3. 1

Gen. 3. 15.

24.

2 Inf.

2. We may learn from this *now*, in the Text, that God finds out some special *Season for the Things of our Peace*, when he deals in Mercy with us. There is a Peculiar

culiar *Day* of Grace, nay sometimes a Particular *Hour* of that Day more than ordinary; being a season more highly *valuable* than any time that we have besides in General. Our Gain or Loss of the Season proves the Gain or Loss of all for ever. Thus it is hinted of *Jerusalem* to the same purpose by our Blessed Lord, *Luke 19. 42.* *Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy Day the things which belong unto thy Peace, but now they are hid from thine Eyes.* Thou *Jerusalem* in time to come maist remember that thou hadst once a Day of Grace offer'd! Once thou mightst have found *Mercy*, but now thou hast *lost thy Season!* There was a Particular time, an express Day of Grace in which Christ Preacht up the Provisions of a Gospel Entertainment, a Day in which they were brought even to *Jerusalem* now ready. Christ tells them the Happy Minute which *the Men of Judah and the Inhabitants of Jerusalem* might once have closed with. He had a special Season of shewing Mercy, and offering the Terms of Salvation among the *Jews*, a Season-day, a Day of a choicer opportunity than any of their Time had been before, or was likely in that Generation

Mat. 5. 3.

to prove again. The Lord was pleased also thus to pitch upon a Particular, special Season under the *Old Testament* to

Rom. 10. *bring Glad-tydings of Good Things to Judah*
15. *and Jerusalem by the Prophet, Isa. 1. 18.*

Come now and let us reason together, saith the Lord, tho' your Sins be as Scarlet, they shall be as white as Snow; tho' they be red like Crimson, they shall be as Wooll: As much as to say, I am now willing for your good, if you can but hit the Season, and let us now argue the Thing together.

Isa. 40. 2. *And likewise afterwards in the same Prophesie, when God speaketh comfortably to Jerusalem, he takes notice of it as a special Season, and expresseth it as an extraordinary, particular time of his Dealing thus with her, Isa. 44. 1. Tet now hear, O Jacob my Servant, and Israel whom I have chosen: Altho' God had been otherwise dealing with them for their Sins, as may be gathered from sundry passages in the former Chapter, yet he Records it as a special time in which he would change his Dealings with them, Tet now hear, O Jacob, my Servant. When God hath shewn Mercy either to Saints or Sinners, to bring in one, or eminently build up the other, he has taken a Peculiar*

Time

Time that may be stiled their Day of *special opportunity*.

And as we have heard of it in *old Time*, even so it is *now*, God is wont to come in still with the Provisions of this Gospel-Supper, Peace, Pardon, Reconciliation to himself in the Blood of Christ, and lay the Foundation of a Saving Work of Grace upon the Heart of a Sinner in some special Season, not indifferently upon any common Time. He does it when the Particulars of the Feast in the Provisions of Gospel-grace may be said to be even now upon a Feast-day ready. The Gospel must in some present Day affect, and work a change in Men. The Provisions that have now of a long time been ready to relieve *one*, and wrought also effectually *according to the working of his mighty* Eph. i. 19. Power, even to *Salvation* upon *some* of you, may not be accompanied with the *Arm of* Isa. 53. 1. the Lord till now upon others found among you. *One* may have met with it as a special Season formerly, and have been provoked by the Love of God to be ready (for a close with the Gospel) *a year ago*, 2 Cor. 9. 2. or, it may be, many years since, whereas *another* may not have found it to be *a Time of Love* till lately, or *a Time of*

Love till now. God meets with some of his Elect under one subject of Grace, and brings them in sooner to Jesus Christ; then he sends out under *another* subject, or another Sermon, or another Preacher with the Invitations and Proposals of Grace again, and makes *new* ones come in as Guests, that his House may be filled with them. He'll run over the Olive, and turn up the Branches of his Vine again, to meet with new Clusters. And therefore he comes again and calls them, tho' they have been *without Christ, aliens from the Common-wealth of Israel, and strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no Hope and without God in the World*, it may be to the *sixth*, the *ninth*, the *eleventh Hours*, till 'tis almost Bed time with them. If you have not heard of the Gospel in Power, until *the Almond-Tree flourish*, and till you have been *well stricken in years*, and *grey hairs are here and there upon you*, yet if you have the Gospel at last, and it calls upon you to *bring forth the Fruits of it in Old Age*, this is a Season in which God is dealing with you; and tho' of *Ancient Times* you have not heard it, yet even now the Provisions are ready for you that are *old and grey-headed*. Thus God finds out

Eph. 2. 12.

Matth. 20.
5, 6.

Eccl. 12. 4.

Luke 1. 18

Hos. 7. 9.

Psal. 92. 14

Isa. 37. 26.

Psal 71. 18

out a *special* Season, and undertakes not the work at any *common* time in General, to deal with Poor Sinners in.

3. God expects there should be a closing with his Calls upon special Seasons. When God provideth our Summer, and brings a Harvest, he expects we should be as wise as the Ant, to lay up against Winter, which provideth her Meat in the Summer, and gathereth her Food in the Harvest, Prov. 6. 8. Solomon as (x) one observes upon the sixth Verse, had put up, as it were into the Pulpit, this little despicable Creature, to instruct *British* Men; go to the Ant, thou Sluggard, consider her ways and be wise. For the Ants are a People not strong, yet they prepare their Meat in the Summer, Prov. 30. 25. That Creature (the Ant) is so Provident, she will not slip the time of preparing Food. The Famous Cartwright that confuted the Jesuits of *Rhemes* in their Glosses upon the New Testament, thus Comments upon her Industry. (y) "The Ant, (says he) as "if she foresaw an Approaching Winter "gets her Provision in the calm Summer, "when the Air is mild and gentle, and "the ways smooth and clean to carry "her Burden in. Sure the Lord takes it

3 Inf.

(x) Arthur Jackson. Vol. 3d. in loc.

(y) Formica quasi Hymis praecia astate parat victum suum cum per aeris serenitatem, & caeli clementiam, perq; viarum planitiem & munditiam justum onus comportare possit. Tho. Cartwright in Pro: erbia Solom. car.

very ill at the Hands of Men, when poor *Insects* on the Ground, and *Fowls* of the Air take more notice of their Appointed Times than we. *Jer. 8. 7. Tea, the Stork in the Heaven knoweth her Appointed Times, and the Turtle, and the Crane, and the Swallow, observe the Time of their coming, but my People know not the Judgment of the Lord.* Birds will

Mat. 12 42 *rise up in judgment with the Men of this Generation and condemn it, because they are upon the Wing before their Season fletb.* God expects our close. Alas! when he hath been trying all things in kind, measure, order, and maketh Providences as well as Ordinances ready for our Good, he looks that we should take notice of his Dealings, and comply with him in them. There is a Particular *now* which makes God offended with us more than ordinary, when we neglect and slight it; because there are special Tokens and Marks of his Grace upon it, and these in a special manner do require us to improve and accept thereof.

4 Inf.

4. *When God calls there is a Harmony, and a special Loveliness in our Seasonable complying with it. Our Duty like every*

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Be
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ry Work and Event of Providence is Beautiful in his Time. There is some Particular Time in which we may be called to obey the Will of God, and when Obedience carries more than a common Loveliness in the Face of it. We may see it exemplified in that great and extraordinary pattern of Obedience, the Faith of *Abraham*, *Gen. 22. 2.* Take now thy Son, thine only Son *Iaac* whom thou lovest, and get thee into the Land of *Moriah*, and offer him there for a Burnt-Offering upon one of the Mountains which I will tell thee off. Go *Abraham*, hearken to my Voice, and obey the Commandment now; **Then** God tries him, and **Then** obedience and a compliance with the Call of God is Beautiful.

In like manner as to us, when the Gospel-command saith, Take now, Sinner, thy Darling, thy Beloved Off-spring, the Lust of thy Constitution, or some Peculiar Bosom-sin, the *Dalilah* whom thou lovest; Cut off a Right Hand, pluck out a Right Eye, and now cast it from thee; accept of my Son *Jesus*, and let go thy Son that serves thee; come to my Feast, and take what I offer thee,

Mat. 5.29,
30.

E c 3

now

now I am come and have set out all before thee. Lo ! now God calls, and accordingly the Sinner's compliance now would prove so Beautiful the very Angels of God would joy to see it, *Luke 16. 7. — joy shall be in Heaven over one Sinner that repenteth.* When there is
 Ecclef. 3. 2. such a Time to be Born, and of obedience
 v. 4. here on Earth, it is a Time to laugh, and a cause of Mirth in Heaven.

Furthermore, There is a special Loveliness in complying seasonably with the
 Job 36. 10 Call of God under Afflictions : If God takes off thine Ear from the Word, and bores it with an Awl of Discipline, now is a Time to hearken. David clings under the Rod, and complies when chastened, he takes notice of the
 Job 33. 11 Whipping-Post, and God's Correction, while he putteth his Feet in the Stocks, Psal. 119. 67. Before I was afflicted I went astray, but **now** have I kept thy Word. As if he had said, I once flighted and contemned my Father's Counsels, but since he hath made his Scourge ready, now I have complied more with him. Well, our compliance with God is Beautiful, or our obedience to his
 Com-

Commands, whether he *calls*, or *chides* us in to Supper.

5. *If this Feast be now ready, it is sad,* s Int. *that Sinners should be now unprovided.* That Supper should be ready for them, but they not ready for Supper, *all things* in a Posture fit for them, but they in a careless, unprovided state just fit for *nothing*. A want of Readiness hath produced Fatal and sad Effects. *The high Places* were not taken away in the Reign of *Jehoshaphat* over *Judah*, because *the People had not prepared their Hearts unto the God of their Fathers*, 2 *Chron.* 20. 33. They were ready for any but the Provisions that God had made for them, and were wholly unprovided to meddle with any Reformation. The Scripture condemns an *unready* Servant, *Luke* 12. 47. *The Servant that prepared not himself* — *shall be beaten with many stripes* : Prepared not] *i. e.* He who was unprovided for God's work when it lay before him, and not ready to comply with his Master's Will, such a Servant shall feel his Master's Blows. The Charge therefore, and the Counsel which Jesus Christ gave unto his Disciples, was this, *Therefore be ye*

- also ready, *Matth. 24. 44.* And be ye therefore ready also, *Luke 12. 40.* But now it is sad, when the Gospel is made ready, and Sinners of the Gentiles are yet unready for it. Behold (saith Christ) *Gal. 2. 13.* I stand at the Door, and knock; but how many obstinate, resolved Sinners that are going on still in their Trespusses do keep a Hand upon the Latch, while he knocks, and they will not open to him! They refuse to let in the King of Glory, tho' he knocks to come in and bring them to a Banquet of Love prepar'd! God is ready with his Son, Christ is ready with himself, yea, the Holy Spirit and the Gospel with the Faithful Preachers of it (These) are all now ready, and yet how many wretched Hearers. that are yet in their Sins are not ready for them! Oh! 'tis sad, that when God calls away to Supper, Men should chuse rather to play than to come in! to be like Children playing in the Markets, rather than put away Childish Things, and come in to the Provisions that have been purchased at a Dear Market for them! It is sad, to be slothful in Business, when we should be fervent in our Spirits, serving the Lord!
- Ah!*
- Matth. 11. 16, 17.*
1 Cor. 13. 11.
Rom. 12. 11.

Ah! how unworthy is their Carriage, that when all is now ready, Supper served in, Grace offered to pardon, cleanse, save them, yet they will stand off, and have neither Hearts nor Stomachs to it! 'tis a high piece of Ingratitude, when Sinners are *not ready* to embrace the Gospel, let the *cause* of their unreadiness be as plausible and specious, as a negligent Hand, or an unbelieving Heart can make it! 'tis sad, when Men will keep their Hands too dirty to *dip them in the Dish with Christ!* Mat. 26. 23 that they will be *cumbred about much* Luke 10: *-serving,* and will rather *run up and down* 40. upon any thing among them that *serve,* Chap. 22. than *sit down* among them that *sit at* 27. *Meat!*

6. Again, it is still worse, when Men 6 Inf. shall even now degenerate from what they have once been! That Men by a slight and temporary Profession should once pretend to be *Guests*, and yet quickly after (it may be) downright Apostates, at least wretched *Backsliders*, and Strangers to Grace and Holiness! what a Horrible Revolt from an open countenancing of the ways of God to a visible Enmity, or at least, a secret Hatred

Col. 1. 21.

Heb. 10.
25.

tred of them ! Once *Zealous* in Profession, now as *hot*, if it lay in their Power, to stir up Persecution ! *Some-time* outwardly reconcil'd, *now* again alienated ! A sad *reverse* of the state of the *Colossians* and all true Believers ! Oh ! how sad was the degenerate state of *Jerusalem*, when the Prophet describes it, *Isa. 1. 21. How is the Faithful City become an Harlot ? It was full of Judgment, Righteousness lodged in it, but Now Murtherers ?* And what ? is it thus with any of you that have read, heard, and professed the Doctrine of the Grace of God ? Are you now degenerate, now worse than ever ? What Apprehensions have *you* of this Gospel now ready ? Could you once rise up in a Readiness for Communion with them that dare *not forsake the Assembling of themselves together*, to be join'd with such as do understand and seek God ? And can you now sit down in a contented slothfulness at home, as if you were shut up in Plenty, and had all things by you ? Could you once set upon the Practice of an outward Reformation, and yet when sanctifying Grace is now ready for you, are you fallen

fallen into your old course again? Don't you need to be mourn'd over, that you should *return with the Dog to your Vomit, and with the Sow that was washed to your wallowing in the Mire* again? 2 Pet.

2. 22. Did you once pretend to hate and rebuke them that regard Lying? And what? Are you now upon every slight occasion, accustomed to utter Lies?

(tho' *lying Lips are an Abomination to the Lord of Truth.*) Did you once pre-

Prov. 12:22.

tend a Regard to the Commandment,

Swear not? And yet even now you can

Jam. 5.12.

ordinarily *Swear by the Greater*, and per-

Heb. 6.16.

haps mock at the Tenderneſs of a Neigh-

bour *that feareth an Oath*, and will tell

Ecclef. 9.2

you that *even for Swearing the Land*

Jer. 23.10.

mourns! Were you once convinced that

you took up a Reproach againſt the

Lord, when you: prophan'd his Ordi-

nances, deſpis'd his Sabbaths, trampled

upon his Goſpel, Blaſphem'd his Re-

verend and Holy Name? And are you

Pſal. 111.9

now as looſe and extravagant, as open-

ly wicked, it may be Debaucht or Pro-

phane, and more than ever? Did you

not once tell Men by your Profeſſion,

that *the Lord was the Portion of your*

Pſal. 16.5.

Cup, and yet can you drink off the Cup

of

Rev. 17.4. *of your Abominations, to add Drunkenness*
 Deut. 29. *to Thirst? Oh! 'tis sad, that you should*
 19.

Rev. 22.11 *have professed Righteousness and Purity, but return again to Uncleanness, and remain filthy still! 'Tis sad, that you should have sate under the Preaching of the Gospel which hath been made and brought in now ready, and yet be hardened any of you by the Deceitfulness of Sin, till you are now worse than ever!*

7 Inf. 7. *It will now make your next Sins the Greater. Present Acts of Grace will aggravate future Acts of Sin. This Days Provision, if refused, will encrease your to Morrow's Provocation. You will presently heap up wrath, if you neglect the Treasures of Mercy longer. If you are not led to Repentance by a Saviour now ready, you will be more greedy to fill up your Sins alway. If the Gospel be a Supper now ready, if all the Blessings of the Kingdom of Grace are now prepared, if Heaven it self be offered, and Everlasting Glory promis'd and set before us, and yet Sinners will not regard the offers of Salvation in the Day of Grace, what shall we then say to these things, but as the Prophet doth,*

Rom. 8.31.

Jer.

Jer. 14. 10. latter part. That the Lord will now remember their Iniquity? and that now also will he give Sentence against them? Jer. 4. 12. latter part. The Sin is the greater, because a rejection of Mercy and Grace in the very Season of it. It is the sign of a more Rebellious and Revolting Heart, if we do not now fear the Lord our God. If Men will not reform, nor now turn and live, why then assuredly now shall they be found faulty, Hos. 10. 2. middle clause. i. e. Now God will look upon their Sin more than he hath been wont to do in time past. You might once perhaps have had a covering to have wrapt up and conceal'd your neglects of God before, but now you are made naked to your shame, and have no cloak Exod. 32. *for your Sin, and therefore now is the* 25.

Judgment of this World, John 12. 31. Joh. 15. 22

8. *It is a mistake of corrupt Flesh and* 8 Inf. *Blood to look back upon the Days of Ignorance, Vanity and Sin, and yet say the former Days were better than these. Alas! What were those Days in which we all had our Conversations in Times past! the Apostle makes our Births which we brought forth in such a Day*
Mon-

Monsters! Eph. 2. 3. — fulfilling the Desires of the Flesh and of the Mind. Was it better in our Carnal Security to have *Fellowship with Devils*, than now at a Table to sit in Communion with God? Was our Morality better, when we only *made clean the outside of the Cup and Platter*, than since we have been at a Feast which must have Vessels clean *within*? Shall there be any that dippeth his Hand in the Dish, count it better to run back from Christ, and be such a *Judas* to betray him? Are the Days of *Darkness* better than those when the Sun *shines* from Heaven? and better than the *shine* of God's Face at Supper? Dare any Soul that hath sate in the King's Hall, look back into the *Devil's Kitchen*, and say *then* it was better with me than *now*? Corruption would fain break loose, it loves not to sit *so long* as Grace delights to be at Supper. It is a Torment to the Flesh, so far as unmortify'd, to keep in God's Presence. Flesh and Blood savours not the Dainties that came down from Heaven, and it would fain return back to be as in Days of Vanity, and as in *Months past* again. But surely, if we should

should hearken to these *complaining*s in Psal. 144. 14.
our Streets, and say, *Wherefore are the*
former Days better than these? we should
 (in the worst sense) *not wisely enquire*
concerning this, Eccles. 7. 10. The Flesh
 will be ready to object, we were not
 once put so hard, as now, to it; we
 need not once have gone so far, or
 took so much Pains to hear, and then
 have had our Faults, or every Miscar-
 riage dealt so hardly with. We were
 once as Merry in our Carriage, as
 Light at Heart, and free from the Bur-
 dens Religion lays upon us, as our
 Neighbours that do but reproach us for
 being *Righteous overmuch*. How is it Eccles. 7. 16.
 that we are grown Melancholly and
 Heavy, and the Case now alter'd with
 us? Come, let us return, *let us make a*
Captain and go back, let us resolve to Num. 14:4
 lay aside our Profession, and it will go
 as well of our side yet again as ever.

This is exactly such a kind of Re-
 volving Spirit as fell among the Jews,
 when they cast off God, and embrac't
 Idols, and when instead of worshipping
 the *Sun of Righteousness*, they adored
 the *Image of the Moon*, Jer. 44. 16, 17.
As for the Word that thou hast spoken
 unto

unto us in the Name of the Lord, we will not hearken unto thee; but we will certainly do whatsoever Thing goeth forth out of our own Mouth, to Burn Incense unto the **Queen** of Heaven, and to pour out Drink-offerings unto her, as we have done, we and our Fathers, our Kings and our Princes, in the Cities of Judah, and in the Streets of Jerusalem: For then had we plenty of Victuals, and were well, and saw no evil. They would rather

v. 19. *make Cakes to worship the Devil than eat of the Bread of Life!* Sirs, if you meet with any thing that is grievous to be born, and think the way to mend it, will be now to *turn from the Holy Commandment*, yet know for a certainty, that your *Sin will find you out*. It will be a base encrease of your Victuals, if you either rob (by your own withdrawing) or pollute (by unhal-

2 Pet. 2. 21
Num. 32.
23.
Mal. 1. 12. *lowed Approaches) the Table of the Lord*, in Hopes it may fare the better with you. It will be a sad mending the Case, to chuse your *own* ways for the Inconveniencies which you think you find in *God's*.

9 Inf.

9. If this Feast be now ready, then now God makes amends for all the Discouragements

couragements and Inconveniences you ever did, or do meet with, to enjoy the Means of Grace. Peradventure, thou hast sometimes found much ado with *Men* to break thro' all thy way to God. Thou hast met with Family-Dis- couragements, Reproaches at home, or Scoffs abroad ; thou hast been in *Jour- neyings often*, in Fastings, Watchings, ^{2 Cor. 11. 26.} Temprations to enjoy Christ at Sup- per ; any thing, *we went thro' Fire and thro' Water*, if it might but conduce to come any ways at Bread. Well, you shall *now* find the Gospel will become a Double Portion to you. *You* that have come to the Provisions of the Feast *in weakness, the Joy of the Lord shall be your strength.* The Bread of God shall be now the sweeter, as you have eate*n the Bread of Affliction* ; and the taste of his Love like *the best Wine*, since you have *mingled your Drink with weeping.* ^{Deut. 16.3 Cant. 7.9. Psal. 102.9} So that a Man shall say, *Verily there is a Reward for the Righteous, Psal. 58. 11.* A Man] perhaps, a Carnal Man that sees how God doth bear thee out ; or the Man, thine Enemy, shall be forc't to acknowledge, that surely, if thou hadst not *Meat to eat which others know*

^{John 4.38}

- not of, thou couldst never break thro' such Discouragement, or get out to a Meal prepar'd so far from home. And blessed be God which hath not turned away my Prayer, nor his Mercy from me, Psal. 66. 20. It is a great Encouragement to wait upon God, when he will give it in to your own Experience, that in keeping his Commandments there is great Reward, Psal. 19. 11. You come it may*
- Mark 8. 3. *be divers of you from far, to come in and Sup with Him, but nevertheless*
- Matth. 6. 5 *you have your Reward, if you find that God who invited you, hath been nigh and not afar off. You are met it may be sometimes, or cold, or chid, some of you, when you are got home. Perhaps some in the Family will rebuke*
- Mark 10. 13. *you for coming hither, as the Disciples in another Case did the People when they brought in Children to Jesus Christ; well, no matter, there is enough in the Entertainment to make amends for all. If God Rains down Mannah upon your Souls, he makes amends, tho' he does not command the Clouds in your return*
- Na. 5. 6. *to rain no Rain upon you. The sprinkling of the Blood of Jesus will recom-*
- 1 Pet. 1. 2. *pense your being met with the showers*
- Job 24. 8. *of*

of the Mountains; ay, the sprinkling it upon your Souls, will make amends, tho' your Bodies may a little, like Nebuchadnezzar's, be wet with the Dews of Heaven. The Love of Christ when he hath brought you into his Banqueting House will warm you, and make amends while you return cold home. Weather shall not chill your Affections, if they are strongly bent for Him, as it is wont, when the Love of many shall wax cold. Again, if Christ whispers Peace into your Souls, you will not think the worse of him at a Banquet, tho' for his sake you have suffered Rebuke, and the Reproaches of Christ have fallen upon you. It will support you, tho' you hear Grievous Things spoken proudly and contemptuously against the Righteous. In a word, if you have chosen the way of Peace, you are provided with an Entertainment that shall recompense the strife of Tongues.

10. Your Hunger and Thirst, your Appetite to this Feast is now come in Season. You have more than Meats for the Belly, and you could not hunger at a better Time than now. Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled, Luke

Dan. 4. 15.

Song. 2 4.

Mat. 24. 12

Jer. 15. 15.

Heb. 11. 26.

Psal. 31. 18

Psal. 119. 30.

Psal. 31. 20

10 Inf.

1 Cor. 6. 13

- . 6. 21. God now will have you to be
 Ezek. 34. no more *consum'd with Hunger*; you
 29. shall not *faint for Hunger in the Top of*
 Lam. 2. 19. *every Street*. You shall not *Thirst*, and
 yet now go without a Draught from
 2 Sam. 23. *the Water of the Well of Bethlehem*. Je-
 15. : sus Christ is provided for your Enter-
 tainment, and you shall now have Meat
 and Drink both. It shall not be unto
 you *now*, as was threatned, *Isa. 20. 8.*
Even as when a Hungry Man Dreameth,
and behold he eateth, but he awaketh, and
behold his Soul is empty; or as when a
Thirsty Man Dreameth, and behold he drink-
eth, but he awaketh, and behold he is faint,
and his Soul hath Appetite. I say, it shall
 Mat. 5. 6. not be so to any who *hunger and thirst*
 after *Righteousness*, because their Appetite
 is come when the Provisions of God are
 now ready. Blessed is the condition of
 such as these, for he hath not *with-*
 Job 22. 7. *holden Bread*, or taken away the *Sheaf*
 Chap. 24. *from the Hungry*: He hath pitied us in
 10. Hunger and in Thirst, and now at once
 2 Cor. 11. can supply our *Fastings often*, and *that*
 27. *the Scripture might be fulfilled*, he hath
 John 19. prepared his Dainties against our Ap-
 24. 28. petite, and made them now ready.
 What a Blessed Journey do we make,
 when

when we come with an Appetite to Jesus Christ ! and get to his House, while his Doors are set open ! and sit at his Table, when his *Oxen and Fatlings* are Mat. 22.4. killed, and I spread now in Plenty on it ! Is it not a Blessed Thing to come and find what we want of Him ? Oh ! *Happy is the People that is in such a* Psal. 144. *Case !* Happy is the People whose Soul 15. *thirsteth* after the Benefits of Christ as *a Dry and Thirsty Land* ; because now Psal. 143.6 Christ takes up the Cup of Salvation, and drinks to such as these in it.

II. *Now is our Salvation nearer than* II Inf. *when we believed.* This is the Testimony that is given *Rom. 13. 11.* our Salvation, that is, our *Eternal* Salvation ; we were saved *Spiritually*, when we were by Faith united to a Saviour ; we shall be saved *Eternally*, when we are with him, where he is, *to behold his Glory.* Joh. 17.24 Now that *other* Supper (in the Presence of Christ immediately) is approaching nearer, than when we sat down first to *this.* We have our Table *now* spread with Grace, what can we have *next* but the Provisions of *Glory in the Highest* ? Luke 2.14 When the Sun *Sets upon this Morn-* Ila. 25.6. *tain,* it will be *Risen* upon the Saints in

Jer. 31. 12. *the Heights of Zion. It is but a little while, and he that shall come, will come, and will not tarry; Heb. 10. 37. The Saints do hear that now is their Supper-time, it is not long after before they shall enter into Peace, they shall rest in their Beds, (in the Bosom of Jesus Christ)*

Isa. 57. 2. *each one walking in his uprightness.*

12 Inf. 12. *Time should now be of a more Precious Esteem with us. We had need be wise, and since we have lost so much,*

Eph. 5. 16. *lay out our utmost to redeem the Time. Now is a Golden space of opportunity, and 'tis pity to throw the Filings of this Gold among the common Heap of Dust. We may almost grudge at the occasions of this Life that come in of every side, like so many little Thieves, and steal Handfuls of Time away. We have Robbers by Day, Eating, Drinking, Con- versing, Visiting, being Visited, and a Great Robber by Night that steals away our Time, when we are insensible of his Approaches. Supper is ready but we have almost every Thing that lets us; we had need then improve the Remainder of an allotted space to sit down at our Gospel-Meal, and Sup.*

13. Lastly

13. Lastly. *You that have suppt may now go to Bed with Comfort.* You are now at Table, but if God calls any of you to depart out of this World, you need not stay for your Fellows that shall tarry, and make an end after. If you are ripe for Glory, you may leave them behind you yet to grow in Grace. When it is late, and thou art tyred, perhaps thy Bones would gladly be at rest, *Psal. 116. 17. Return unto thy rest, O my Soul, for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee.* So *Luke 2. 29, 30 Lord, now lettest thou thy Servant depart in Peace, according to thy Word: For mine Eyes have seen thy Salvation.* Simeon had Supt, and therefore thought it a Blessed Season now to go to Bed. So after thou hast Supt, and done thy work, a Bed will do well. When thou hast made an end of Supper, thou art here fit to go to thy Heavenly Sabbath's rest.

13 Inf.

John 13.1

2 Pet. 3. 12

The Second use of Exhortation, to persuade and entreat Sinners not to forsake their own Mercies. The substance of the Exhortation * *speakesh on this wise*, that seeing the Provisions of the Gospel are now ready, we would all indeed labour after more Readiness in

II.

Jonah 2.8.

* Rom. 10.

6.

Luk 12-42

our selves to receive *our Portion of Meat in due Season*. That it may become the more useful unto us, I shall manage it under these two Parts. 1. Backing it with Motives. 2. Urging Counsel.

First, As to Motives I shall only use these Three Considerations.

1. *The Day of our Entertainment is now sliding over.* We may observe by Isa. 33. 2. what *Degrees* our shadow goes down. *Wo unto us for the Day goeth away, for the shadows of the Evening are stretched out, Jer. 6. 4.* latter part. Our Time spends, our Day wastes apace, the shadows are long, and if we are not quick, we must be fain to cut our Work the shorter: *The shadows of the Evening are stretched out*, as you know the shadows are longest, when the Sun is lowest. The Supper-Hour is expiring, wo unto us; the end of all Flesh is at hand! we are arrived almost in *our Day to the shutting in of the Evening*; God seems, as to the state of the World, to be just now lighting up his (2) *Sabbath-candle*, that we may now see to end Supper by a little Light he lends us, before he turns all *into the shadow of Death*, and *make it gross Darknest*, Jer. 13. 16. We

'(2) Dr. Lightfoot's Works. Harmony of the New Testament. Fol vol. I. p. 18.

We *must* by all means keep *this* Feast, as the Apostle said of his keeping the *Passeover* in *Jerusalem*, and we can never keep it but in this our Day, while the Offers and Provision of the Gospel are now tendred to us. A Feast that is *now* ready may be quickly dispos'd of out of our Reach. The *Sun of Righteousness* hath not stood still throughout all our Day of Grace, no more than that *other Sun* in the Firmament is used to stay and lengthen out the common Days of Nature, tho' yet we read upon Two extraordinary occasions of a miraculous prolonging the Day, between the rising of the Sun and the going down of the same. One instance is, when the Sun stood still in the days of *Joshua*, and the other is, when the Sun returned ten Degrees backward, upon the Dial of *Ahaz*, by which Degrees it had gone down, in the days of *Hezekiah*: But the day of Grace, like our stated common days, is wearing off continually, that nothing can slacken the motions of it, or bring it one Degree backwards, to keep it a moment longer from the Period to which it hastens. The Day of Grace wastes, tho' the offers of Grace abound. And

as

Acts 18. 21

Mal. 4. 2.

Psalm. 50. 1.

113. 3.

Josh. 10.

13.

Isa. 38. 8.

as the day of Salvation spends, so it lays a greater necessity and duty on *us*, to look after the *work* of Salvation, before the *offers* of the Thing *come to a perpetual End*. He that is now present to *entertain* us, is not afar off to *judge* us, if we refuse to be fed before our Supper's over; for *behold the Judge standeth before the door*, Jam. 5. 9. latter part. He is ready to step in and examine it, whether we have Grace, and eaten of the Bread of God, or no.

Consider, the Table shall *not* be always furnisht, or the Cloth continue after Supper for any succeeding Entertainment, to treat one Sinner *here*. God hath set the Provisions of Grace forth, that *to day* we might come and *take our* Prov. 7. 18. *Fill of Love*; but if we will not obey, Psal. 42. 8. while the Lord shall *command his Loving Kindness, in the* (Remnant of the) *Day-time*, (in the Evening-Time for us) he will not offer us Kindness a Moment beyond the Limits of the day he sets us. If there be not an Improvement of this present passing Season, there will be no prolonging it to endure beyond our Supper-Time. Time must be *observ'd*, and will *not wait on us*, and the Dews of
of

of Grace are like *the Showers upon the Grass that tarry not for Man, nor waiteth for the Sons of Men*, Mic. 5. 7. That is, it is their inseparable Property to attend the Appointments of God, and not our own Pleasure. And these Dews are sliding off in the very Moments while they are distilling from Heaven on us, they are *flying* from us faster than (it may be) they are now *filling* of us. We may say of the *Good Day* of our Entertainment, as the Prophet doth of the *Great Day* of the Lord, Zeph. 1. 14. *It is near, (even the end of it is near) and hasteth greatly.* Much of *your Day* is spent already, and under every Offer and Sermon of the Grace of God you have still less of your day to come! Alas! it slides so *fast*, and hath been sliding off so *long*, that you have but a *little while* more to partake of Grace in; and tho' you may yet see to eat while *the shadows of the Evening are stretched out*, yet, as to your own Being in this World, God will not after so long a *Summer's Day* light up a *Candle* in the Grave, to lengthen out your opportunity, when *Day-light's* shut in.

Jer. 6. 4.

Nemo finit
mundum ex-
ercet merca-
tutam.

2. What if it should be now *the Last Day of the Feast*, as it was when Jesus stood

stood and cryed ! The Feast of Tabernacles among the *Jews* did not expire sooner, nor endure longer than the space of Seven Days, according to the Commandment, *Lev. 23. 24.* And on this *last Day of the Feast* *Jesus stood and cryed, saying, If any Man thirst, let him come unto me and drink. John 7. 37. i. e.* If any Man wants special, Rich Grace to *supply all his need*, if he desires to be entertain'd with Righteousness, Counsel, Pardon, Strength, Comfort, or the like, let him come in quickly *now*, and I will bestow it at the shutting up of House, in the close of the Feast before the Guests are risen. It is the last opportunity, *This is a Day of Entertainment, but no Feast to Morrow.* So under the Gospel, we are yet within the Compass of a Spiritual Feasting-Time, but we have no Assurance *how long* ? Our *Festival* may expire with this *Sabbath*, and this Sermon prove our last Meal ! God can say to a Graceless Sinner, that *loyters away his Season*, as he did to the Rich Man that *laid up Earthly Substance, Thou Fool, this Night thy Soul shall be required of thee ! Luke 12. 20.* Your Great Possessions would be a very unprofitable heap of Lumber, and all your Barns or

Bags

Psal. 74.9.

Mat. 19.22

Bags full of Encrease a hoard of poor Stuff, if your Souls be empty, and you are sent Supperless to Bed, at the close of the Gospel-Entertainment. Lay it, Sinner, unto thine Heart, what if God should now shut up his Tender Mercies, and in wrath open his Mouth against thee ! Boast not thyself of to Morrow, lest with Belshazzar thou be slain that night ; or, with a King of Israel, in the Morning be utterly cut off.

Psal. 77. 9.

Prov. 27. 1.

Dan. 5. 30.

Hos. 10. 15

3. If it were now already with thee after Supper, in that Black Night in Hell, the offers of this Grace would be never tendered more. Now you may drink, and drink abundantly at the Feast, but not a drop of this Living Water will be then obtained to cool your Tongue. See Luke 16. 23, 24. In Hell he lift up his Eyes being in Torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his Bosom, and he cryed and said, Father Abraham, have Mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the Tip of his Finger in Water, and cool my Tongue, for I am tormented in this Flame. Father Abraham have mercy on me ;] but in Hell (if Grace doth not prevent our coming thither) Abraham will be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not. There is not one Drop or little Crumb of Mercy to be had, when the Furniture of the Gospel-Table

Song. 5. 1.

Isa. 63. 16.

Table is over. There is neither *Provision*, nor so much as a *Candle* to Sup by in outer Darknes. *And besides all this there is a Great Gulf fixed*, Luke 16. 26. A Gulf] i. e. * a Great gaping or parting asunder of the Two Countreys by such a wide Division you can never step over. There is

Mat. 4. 16. no passing from *the Regions of the shadow of Death*, even of the second Death to the

Heb. 11. 16 Better Countrey, *so that they which would pass from hence to you, cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence.* The state will be fixt, and the offers of Grace ended. God will feed nothing in Hell, but

Luk. 16. 26 *the Worm that dieth not, and the Fire that is not quenched.* Conscience indeed will have a stinging Remembrance to gnaw upon, but the Sinner will have no Refreshment with such a Guest for ever. God will drink to you no more, Sinners, in a *Lake of Fire*, unless it be in *the Wine of his wrath*, which will be poured out without mixture into the Cup of his Indignation, Rev. 14. 10. There can be no rising to Supper, if he should cast you out to lodge in a Bed of Flames! These are the Motives, and Oh! that God would fasten them upon your

Rev. 19. 20, &c. Minds by his Spirit, *as a Nail in a sure place.*

Isa. 22. 23. Secondly, As to *Counsel*, I would leave these

these following *Directions* with you, and close up the whole Subject.

1. *Now consider this ye that forget God, Psal. 50. 22.* Consider it, that Grace is now offered, and the Statute of Refusal will next be executed. God is now calling, but remember, if you will not hearken, you will be then crying ! Mercy doth now invite you, but Fury will then Fall upon you. *Know therefore this Day and consider it in thine Heart, as Moses, in that Solemn Advice to Israel, Deut. 4. 39.* Let Sinners that are desperate and hard-hearted, or careless and unregardful of themselves, consider this. *What will ye do in the Day of Visitation, and in the Desolation which shall come from far ? to whom will ye flee for Help, and where will ye leave your Glory ? Isa. 10. 3.* What *Provision* canst thou have, if thou hast none of this *Supper* ? Canst thou bear it to Sup with Devils, and reject Angel's Food ? What will become of all that airy Glory thy Mind is now Feasting on ? what will it avail thee, that thou hast Supt on *Vanity*, if thou must be fed with *Torments*, when thy Day of Grace is ended. Remember, thou art going, as swift as Time can post thee, into the Land of Forgetfulness, Oh ! thou busie, distracted Worldling that
hast

Gal. 1. 10. 4 *hast forgotten to eat thy Bread.* Men indeed
 Jam. 1. 24. *Will forget thee, what manner of man thou*
 Psal. 95. 11 *wast, but God will swear in his wrath, if*
 thou wilt not meddle with the Grace he
 Amos 8. 7. *offers, that surely he will never forget any of*
thy Works, but will remember thy Faults
that Day.

2. *Acquaint now thy self with God,* Job
 22. 21. *Be not a Stranger now to the God*
 who will one Day take such knowledge
 of thee, as either infallibly to save, or else
 in Hell destroy thee. Look to it, Oh thou
 young Man ! and remember *now thy Crea-*
tor in the days of thy Youth, Eccles. 12. 1.
 Look to it, thou ignorant Man, and *lay up*
sound Knowledge, that thou maist say with
 the Blind Man, when Christ had opened
 John 9. 25 *his Eyes, One Thing I know, that whereas I*
was Blind, now I see. If the Provisions are
 now ready, let them be no longer as a
strange Thing unto thee. Be acquainted, that
this is Life Eternal under the Gospel for
 poor, condemned Malefactors, already dead
 in Law, *to know thee the only true God, and*
Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent, John 17. 3.
 Psal. 34. 8. *Thou wilt never taste and see, till thou art*
acquainting thine Heart with Wisdom.

3. *Get now into Friendship with a Lover of*
 Tit. 1. 8. *Hospitality.* Be not an Enemy in thy Heart

or in thy ways to this Feast-Maker under one call more. *Be at peace, thereby good shall come unto thee.* Throw down your Arms, and beg for Quarter, if you would find mercy with the Lord in that Day, for he spares none with their *Weapons of War* about them. You spoil your Banquet, so long as you run upon *the thick Bosses of his Buckler.* Be reconciled, and made Friends to God presently; for *he* will have none but Friends to *come in and Sup with him.* Enemies must fall, but shall not be Feasted, *Luke 19. 27. But those mine Enemies which would not have me to reign over them bring hither and slay them before me.* Provoke not God by *Delays*, when his Supper is *now* ready; if his wrath be *kindled* Spiritual Mannah will *melt* away from you, as Corporal Mannah did from the *Israelites*, when *the Sun waxed hot.* See that the Master of this Feast and you are made *one*, or at least *if Two*, yet you may either *walk together*, or sit together at Meat, when by Grace ye are so *agreed.* Be reconcil'd and go make your Friend sure. *Do this now, my Son, and deliver thy Self, when thou art come into the Hand of thy Friend, go humble thy self and make sure thy Friend, Prov. 6. 3.* As thou art now once again invited into the Ban-

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queting-

Exod. 16.

21.

Amos 3. 3.

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queting-House of Love, come prostrate in the Dust, and lye at Christ's Feet; the *lower* you chuse to sink, the *higher* you shall rise, when you sit at Christ's Hand. *Friend, go up higher, then shalt thou have worship in the Presence of them that sit at Meat, Luke 14. 10.*

4. *Now accept of Grace.* Put forth thy Hand now and lay hold upon *Eternal Life.* *1 Tim. 6. 12.* Tho' you have staid out from this Feast long, yet make the more haste, and be not afraid, or asham'd Now to come at last. Take Encouragement, and knock at the Gate of Mercy, for tho' the Sun be low, yet if you are in earnest for admission, 'tis not too late to be let in.

5. *Be now more Holy,* if you partake of what is now ready. Serve the Lord better, and Act for the Interest of Christ, to keep up the Reputation and Honour of this Feast more than ever. Omit nothing which may advance the Gospel, and do nothing that may tend to make the Provisions of it sink. More especially, *Now yield your Members Servants of Righteousness unto Holiness, Rom. 6. 19.* Let your Eyes be more stedfastly fixed, where you have seen his Salvation; let your Ears be more attentive, that even the Ear may now try words,

words, and the Mouth taste his Meat. Let Job 12.11
the string of your *Tongue* be loosed, and
speak of these All Things (*now ready*) in
the Language of *Canaan* plainly. Stretch
out your *Hands* unto God, that he may
not stretch out *his* to you in vain. Refrain
your *Feet* from every evil way. Let your
Loins be girt about with Truth. Keep
your *Hearts* with all Diligence. Take
Wisdom as an Ornament to bind about
your *Heads*, and set your *Faces* in reality
towards *Sion*. This is to be Holy, and to
yield your *Members* Servants of Righteous- Rom. 6.19
ness unto Holiness.

6. Now cry and make Intercession to the
Lord of Hosts. Save now I beseech thee, O
Lord, Psal. 118. 25. In the Morning direct
thy Prayer unto God and look up, that He
who giveth unto the young Ravens when Psal. 147.9
they cry, would refresh thee with good
Things: And at Evening do thou return, Psal. 59.6.
and beg thou maist not lye down upon thy
Bed, until thou hast Supt upon Jesus
Christ. Beseech the Lord, that he would
impart to thee this Hidden Treasure, and
fill thee as a Vessel of Mercy with it. Pray,
that he would change thy Diet, and give
thee Righteousness, Peace, and Holiness,
not suffering thee (however under some

kinds of Spiritual Sickneſs thou maiſt have evil Longings) to eat that which is *common or unclean*.

7. *Now take Pains*, rather than loſe ſuch Proviſion now ready. It is a ſhame to be ſo forward to encrease in *Goods*, and ſo backward to lay in *Grace*. Take but as much Pains on a Lord's Day to *Occupy with your Talent*, as you have done upon the Week, to ſave or *gain a Penny*. Lay up for your *Souls*, as you are wont to do for your *ſelves*. Get up and travel to a *Meeting*, as you could to Traffique in a *Market* the Day before. Go thro' as many inconveniences, wet, wind and weather, to obtain a *ſure reward*, as you are wont to venture thro', to partake of *uncertain Riches*. Think not a *Few Miles* to be ſhort enough for your Pleaſure or your Profit, and then too long, when you compute them for a *Sabbath-Day's Journey*. Think how ill Chriſt takes it, who travell'd farther to buy in Proviſions for *you*, than you can to fetch them now from Him ; while he ſees how backward you are to walk a Mile to hear the Word of God, and yet are compell'd by other Motives to go *Twain*, yea *many* to accompliſh other Work. If you think you dwell from *Jeruſalem*

Jerusalem more than a Sabbath-Day's Journey, come then to a *Feast* as you would to a *Fair*, get up and Ride, and be not like the *Horse* or the *Mule* which have no *Psalm 32.9.*
understanding. Remember, that perhaps you have borrowed or hir'd a *Horse* to *Trade* with, but never did so in all your Days, to get to the Means of Grace, tho' you could not come on *Foot*. Oh ! think you that have been negligent under this pretence of *Distance*, what Conscience will say unto it, if it were awakened in the *Hour of Death* ; or what God himself will, if he tries it without Mercy at the *Day of Judgment* !

8. Beg of God that this *Holy Diet* may now agree with you. It would be sad, that when God hath made ready, his Supper should be too strong for you, while you discovered an Aversion to the Pure Worship, or the Pure Ways of God ! It is a sign of a most weak and sickly Stomach, when you can't bear it, perhaps sometimes, so much as to smell in the *Solomon Feasts* ! the very smell of Holiness Amos 9. 21.
offends you, and you cannot endure the Religion of the Apostle, because it is pure Jam. 1. 27.
and undefiled.

9. Don't think the Ordinances of God Tedious,

dious, or that you sit too long at Meals: Consider, that Ordinances and the Opportunities of Grace are *Eating Hours*, don't grudge your Time then in your way to Heaven, while you are Baiting at any Inn that's needful. The People of God when they sit at Meat are often troubled they rise *so soon*, and art thou complaining, thou art made to sit *too long*? To say, *Behold what a weariness is it*, as *Mal. 1. 13.* is not a sign that you are qualify'd to be for ever with the Lord.

1 Thef. 4.

17.

Pfal. 118 4

10. Let them now that fear the Lord say, That his Mercy endureth for ever. Remember Him that is staying you with Flaggons, and say with the Church, Now will I sing to my well-beloved, *Isa. 5. 1.*

11. Keep up an Honourable Esteem of Jesus Christ. Oh! don't come to a Feast, and now at last upon the close of all murmur against the Good Man of the House. Blessed is he that is not offended in me, *Mat. 11. 6.*

12. Lastly, Now bear Afflictions. If he breaketh thy Bones, yet bless him for Christ our Passeeover, where not a Bone of him shall be broken. Do not refuse Correction, tho' God sometimes Carves out thy Sorrowful Meat, as Job calls his Afflictions.

Joh. 19. 36

Job 6. 7.

afflictions. If he gives thee *the Bread of Affliction*, and *the Water of Adversity*, do not impatiently or frowardly spit it out again, seeing he will be ever mindful of his Covenant, and hath given Meat unto them that fear him. And thy Cup of Mercy that now runneth over may encourage thee to take a sip of that other Bitter Cup he gives thee. Thy Cup is a little Cup to Christ's; A Drop of Wormwood, His a Draught of Gall, and full of Dregs at Bottom; yet the Cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it? Well then, take Encouragement, O Believer, under thy Trials, and now do not faint. Despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint, when thou art rebuked of him, Heb. 12. 5. bear his Reproofs, seeing thou art now in the Banqueting-House of Love. He will not kick thee from the Table, tho' now he chides thee at it. He will not be always wroth, tho' now he seems to have hid his Face at the upper-end from thee. Wait for the Cup of Consolation, tho' thou hast mingled thy Drink with weeping. Bear it with Christian Patience, with a Holy Faith and Submission, tho' now for a Season (if need be) ye are in Heaviness through manifold Temptations.

Isa. 30.20.

Psal. 111.5

Psal. 23.5.

Joh. 18.11

Isa 57.16.

Psal. 102. 9

1 Pet. 1.6.

There

There is enough of Love prepar'd to ease thee of thy Burdens now, and in Time to take them off from thee. Do not think
 John 1.29. the worse of *the Lamb of God*, tho' thou
 36. must eat it as the Jews did *their Lamb* in
 Exod. 12. the Passover, with *Bitter Herbs*. God
 8. may entertain thee with Grace in a Winter's Day, which tho' short, yet is dark and stormy : But let it comfort thee in
 Mat. 24.32 thy Tribulation, that *Summer is now nigh at Hand*. When all the Bread in thy Basket is spent, and no more for thee *in the*
 Psal. 48.8. *City of our God* here, but Mannah it self fails, and Grace is ended, yet still God hath provided thee a Summer's Store in Glory ! *Come therefore, for all Things are now ready.*

22 SE60

The END.

